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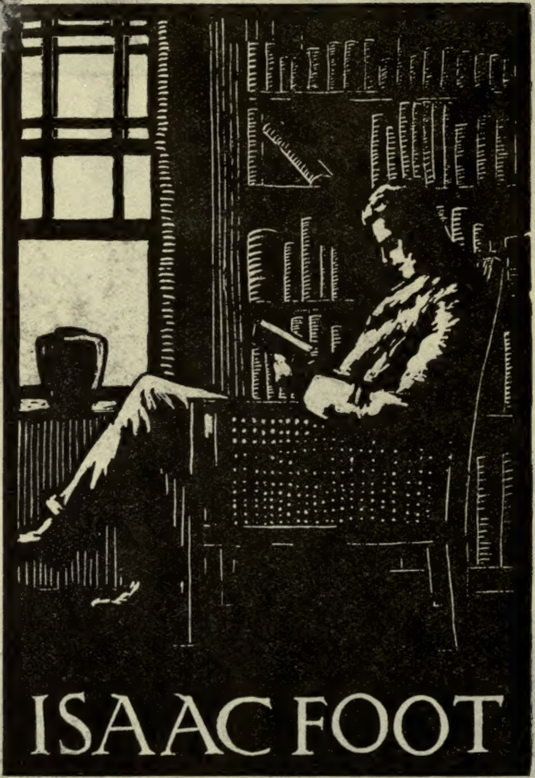
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MEMOIRS OF THE VERNEY FAMILY

VOL. III.

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MEMOIRS OF THE VERNEY FAMILY
DURING THE CIVIL WAR.

Compiled from the Letters and Illustrated by the Portraits
at Claydon House, Bucks.

By FRANCES PARTHENOPE VERNEY.

With a Preface by S. R. Gardiner, M.A., LL.D.

London: LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO.
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Walker & Boutall Ph.Sc.

from a bust in Middle Claydon Church.

Verney, Frances Parthenope (Nightingale)
" "

MEMOIRS OF THE VERNEY FAMILY

DURING THE COMMONWEALTH

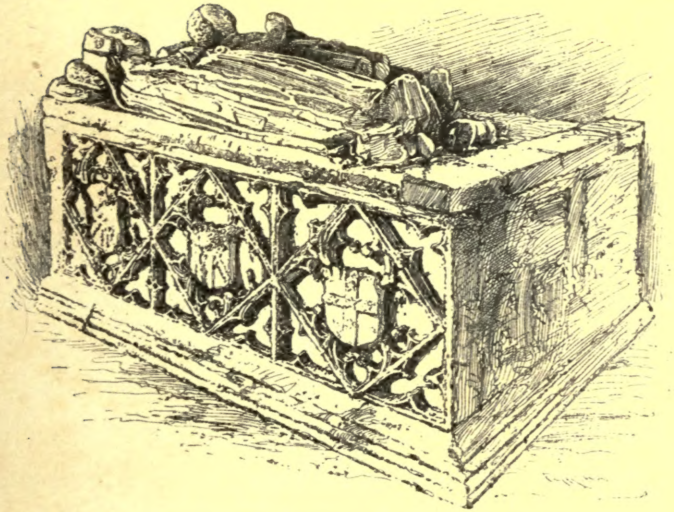
1650 TO 1660

COMPILED FROM THE LETTERS AND ILLUSTRATED BY
THE PORTRAITS AT CLAYDON HOUSE

BY

MARGARET M. VERNEY

> 'More yet of this
> For 'tis a chronicle of day by day
> Not a relation for a breakfast'



VERNEY TOMB, KING'S LANGLEY CHURCH

VOL. III

LONDON
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
AND NEW YORK: 15 EAST 16th STREET
1894

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PREFACE

TO

THE THIRD VOLUME

THE materials for continuing the Verney Memoirs are only too abundant, as, during the latter half of the seventeenth century, the letters increase in length and in numbers.

The heroic age of the Civil War is over. No later Verney plays such a part in Court and camp as Sir Edmund Verney the Standard-bearer, or woman claims our love and reverence as did that 'incomparable person' Dame Mary. But the interest of the story has changed rather than diminished; we have more variety of character; and the incidents are given with greater fulness of detail. In attempting to continue Lady Verney's work I have again to acknowledge the invaluable help given me by the Hon. Mrs. Sotheby and the Hon. Catherine Spring-Rice, by Dr. S. R. Gardiner, the Rev. Ll. J. Kenyon Stow, and other kind friends and correspondents.

To those readers, American as well as English, who have testified their interest in the former part of the story, and their wish to know more of Sir Ralph Verney's fortunes, the present volume is committed in the words of one of Sir Ralph's letters to their old friend Lady Sussex :—

'Bath, 14th August, 1640.

'Hee that hath neither newes nor businesse and yet ventures to Write, had need bee very confident of his owne invention or of the friend hee writes to. All pretences to the first, I have good reason to disclaime, but for the second I cannot be persuaded to quit my interest there. . . . I now presume to trouble you with these lines to let you know, there is none more ambitious to receive your commands, or readier to obey them, than your most faithful and humble servant . . .'

MARGARET M. VERNEY.

CLAYDON HOUSE, WINSLOW :
August 1894.

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MEMOIRS OF THE VERNEY FAMILY

DURING

THE COMMONWEALTH

CHAPTER I.

SIR RALPH VERNEY A WIDOWER.

1650–1651.

If I had thought thou couldst have died,
  I might not weep for thee ;
But I forgot when by thy side
  That thou couldst mortal be :
It never through my mind had past
  The time would e'er be o'er,
And I on thee should look my last
  And thou shouldst smile no more !
And still upon that face I look
  And think 'twill smile again,
And still the thought I will not brook
  That I must look in vain !
But when I speak—thou dost not say
  What thou ne'er leftst unsaid,
And now I feel, as well I may,
  Sweet Mary ! thou art dead.—WOLFE.

MARY was dead. This was the central fact of Ralph Verney's life as he sat in his desolate house at Blois in May 1650. As long as Mary lived the loss of friends and fortune, the rending asunder of political ties, left his real inner life untouched. Absolutely devoted to him, her common sense, her piety, and not least her playfulness, had made his wife the best of counsellors and the most charming of companions. Ralph had often thought over Mary's future, and had provided for her comfort in the dim far-away years when, in the course of nature, she should become a widow; but it had never occurred to him that he himself might be left without her.

'An absolute detestation of all manner of Businesse' and of society fell upon him. 'Ah, Deare Doctor,' he writes, 'the sorrows that possess my soule are my companions in every place, and make the sollitary corners of the world the most agreeable to my humour; for there (when words are wanting) I have liberty to weepe my Fill, and when these Floodgates can noe longer runn, my sighs and groanes bewaile the most unutterable losse, that now afflicts, Your most disconsolate and unfortunate servant.'

Of the seven children born to Sir Ralph and Dame Mary, two only survived her; Edmund, aged 13, had now been absent from England nearly seven years, and John, aged 9, had been at Blois since his mother brought him back with her from Claydon in 1647. These little boys, with a French manservant and an English maid or two, formed Sir Ralph's household, managed with painful and scrupulous economy. In the autumn the family party was increased by the arrival of the two little Eure girls, with their waiting-gentlewoman Luce Sheppard.

Better days were now dawning, as the sequestration was taken off Sir Ralph's estate; but creditors were clamouring to be paid, and he was honourably anxious to cut down all expenses, except those necessary for the boys' education, till he could satisfy them in full.

It was not his money-matters only that Sir Ralph passed in review during his solitary evenings; the more he pondered over the beauty of his wife's character, the more clearly he saw the flaws in his own. He thought over 'the rules he had walked by,' and desired to amend them where they were faulty, and to live up to a higher standard—'God haveing bent his Bow like an Enemy, and made me desolate, by taking away her that was pleasant in mine Eyes, now, now is the Time to breake off my sinns by righteousnesse, and mine iniquities by shewing mercy to the Poore and then . . . whatever miseries befall me, they shall all dye with, if not before mee, and hee that setts a marke on the Foreheads of those that sigh, and redeemes the soules of his servants; in his own good way and time will afford mee deliverance.'

Dr. Denton is anxious that Sir Ralph should have some trusty 'English servant or sister or kinsman about him,' who would care for him if he should be sick, and who could 'act the part of a friend as well as of a servant.' Sir Ralph entirely agrees with him, but when he goes over 'the cattalogue' of his relations, he cannot think of one able to be of use to him that can be spared, and he remembers what ill-luck he has had with too many of them ; he feels it so hopeless that any companionship should take the place of Mary's, that he thinks ' 'tis much better to be alone, and trust God with all.'

In the absence of near relations, Sir Ralph had three special friends at Blois—Mr. William Gee, a distant cousin, Mr. Thomas Cordell, and Monsieur Duval. Mr. Gee came of a north country family that represented Beverley, Cockermouth, or Kingston-on-Hull from the first Parliament of James I. to the last Parliament of William III. Sir Ralph visited his cousin's home when driving from Claydon to Malton in 1653, and thus writes to him of the empty house and of the changed appearance of the parish church under the Puritan régime : ' I have not failed to pay my Homage and respects to Bishopp's Burton, 'twas but a mile out of my way ; soe I rose one hour the sooner, and went quite round your Parke and Pallace ; and in earnest, though Both doe mourne for want of you, theire Master, yet all lay well without, and cleane enough within. But I confesse had it not beene for the Toombe and Steeple, I should scarce have knowne either the Church nor Chancell, but this disease is Epidemicall, over all our climate, therefore you must not think to have it otherwise there.'

The Cordells were also a parliamentary family. A William Cordell represented Bridport in the time of Richard II.; Edward Cordell had sat for Portsmouth in the reign of Elizabeth; and another member of the family, Robert Cordell, was to be Sir Ralph's colleague in the Parliaments after the Restoration. Mr. Thomas Cordell was a bachelor with straitened means, fond of intellectual pursuits, of a kind heart, though somewhat hasty temper. He had been often driven to borrow money of Sir Ralph in sudden emergencies, but their friendship had stood the strain. He gave Mun Verney regular lessons in Latin, when they all travelled together, and he would do 'Mathematicalls' for diversion with Mr. Gee. He had generally one or two young Englishmen with him, Royalists, whose parents would not send them to Oxford or Cambridge under the Puritan régime, and he seems to have been much liked by his pupils.

Monsieur Duval was an elderly Frenchman, whose real name, Sir Ralph tells us, was Duport. He had business relations with Englishmen, and was often useful to the exiles when he visited London. Sir Ralph had a great regard for him, and valued his intimate acquaintance with French history and literature, which his own increased familiarity with the language permitted him now to study and to enjoy. After Monsieur Duval's death in the winter of 1653, Mr. Cordell, speaking about him to a Monsieur Monfort, mentioned that his wife 'was wont to goe and com betweene London and Paris. Upon this hee inferred that then certainly hee had two wives; telling mee that Monsieur Du Val was borne about Vendosme, and formerly was by profession an advocate, and that unfortunately about 30 yeares agoe, hee killed a man in France, since which time (beeing constrayned to fly) he had never lived with his wife, but that 3 yeares agoe, hee saw his wife at Tours, and dined with her, who reproached him very severely of unkindnesse towards her. I am very sorry that I unwarily should discover this secrett.'

Sir Ralph refused to lend any credence at all to the story, though Mr. Cordell, while commending his charity, thought 'the presumptions very urgent on the other side. . . . Monsieur Monfort seems to be a man of very good fashion. . . . But let it bee as it will bee in God's name.' Whatever sad secrets may have been hidden in Monsieur Duval's past life, the four men met in very good fellowship, and Monsieur Duval's letters occur constantly in the correspondence of the next four years. Sir Ralph had a great horror of smoking, but the friends played at chess and discussed the latest news from England over a glass of the old canary sack that Mary had brought from the Claydon cellars. Sir Roger Burgoyne's weekly letter to Sir Ralph provided the best political and social gossip for these evening discussions; whether he announced a great victory of 'our General' [Cromwell] over the Scots, or that 'the statues of King James and King Charles were pull'd downe from Pauls the last week, and that of

King Charles from the Exchange,' nothing was too serious or too trivial for Sir Roger's industrious pen.

Dr. Denton sent out a curious account of two books that had been published in the previous year (1649), called 'New Lights shininge in Bucks.' 'The Doctrine is briefly this, that Kings are of the Beast and the Divell, that there ought to be communitie and levellinge, and declares that all men beinge alike priviledged by birth, they were to enjoy the creatures alike, without propriety one more then another; and noe man to Lord or command over his owne kind, nor to enclose the creatures to his owne use, and that the Levellers' principles are most just and honest.'

In the spring of 1650 a well-informed friend, signing himself 'J. R.,' sent to Sir Ralph a graphic picture of the state of parties in England. He was a moderate man, not much in love with any of them, who only wished for peace and a settled government. Cromwell's figure already loomed large in the Parliament that was helpless to control so formidable a servant. 'Sir, I am much ashamed to be soe long in performing my promise to write you an account of affaires heere. (1st.) As to the Presbyterian party, they were never more aggrieved than now in conscience and estate. Take the new engagement they cannot, because it is (say they) expressly contrary to the covenant, and if they do not they must starve and begg, and be worse then sequestration, for they are outlawed persons and can- Feb. 14, 1650 nott sue for tythe or other real estate, and cannot have a fifth allowed them as the worst of the Cavaliers have. I (who have taken this engagement) do think this summum jus : yet they may see a just hand in it, for they sequestered any man who would not take the covenant, and adjudged them friends (though in heart enemyes) who tooke it. Willingly I would have no more Oaths nor Engagements by compulsion, till we have either kept what we have taken or repented for what we have broken. (2nd.) As to the Independent party, of which many are truly Godly and pious, their nomber increases little, because Atheism increases soe fast ; for indeed many who had great knowledge in Spiritual things, are now puffed up with vaine fancyes to live above Ordinances, yea above the Scriptures, and at last declare vice to be virtue, that God sees no sinne, a sad generation of People. This puts me in minde of the (3d) sorte of people, I meane the Levellers, most of which party have been cordyall against the common enemy, yet of Principles inconsistent with the word of God (which is the rule I desire to walke by), ffor but foure dayes since, the Council of State sent to apprehend a grand Leveller, who uppon the approach of the first Messenger stabd him to the heart with a dagger, and soe he did the second, laid him dead on the ground also ; and the third he mortally wounded, who is also since dead. The Councell of State putt out a Proclamation offering 50*l.* to any man to approach this Leveller, whose name was Marston (once of the Army) but the bold Leveller returnes this answer in print and setts it upon Whitehall gate, that he justyfyes the act to be lawfull, and will be the death of whomsoever shall attempt to secure his person. His party upheld him in it, yet he keepes private, for the soldiers would secure him, knew they where he was. Heere is such a transmutation of affaires, Religions, and opinions, that no man knowes well how to demeane himselfe without offence. My (4th &) last party I shall instance, are the Cavalieres, whose wisdome and necessity, rather then goodwill, inclines them to be quiett. The better sort will hardly stirr, the lower sort of squeirs . . . are ready to rise, soe great are their wants ; an act of Oblivion with a condition of good behaviour (else to forfeit it) would doe good, but 'tis petit treason to speake it. Yesterday the House voted the continuance of the Council of State, (which to some of the House was too much a signe of perpetuity ;) onely 4 men excepted—(1) the deceased L. of Pembroke :[1] (2 & 3) the E. of Mulgrave, and L. Gray of Warke, because they never sate in Councell since they were chosen : (4) Sir John Danvers by vote laid aside, the reasons are rather private than publique, for nothing but voluntas appeared above board. The next great thing in agitation is, what is to be done now the Generall scruples the Engagement, which he hath been pressed to subscribe unto, (as the whole Army hath done.) His answer is, he desires to hinder none to take it. He will serve the Parlement as faithfully as any that doe take it, and he beleeves the Parlement is persuaded ten thousand take it, who would destroy the Parliament had they power and opportunity. And he hopes the experience they had of him will not give occasion of distrusting him. When my L. Lieutenant comes over, you will then understand the issue of this businesse. God direct the present Authority to oblige and not to disengage friends, for they are very few, not one in a hundred left as was when you went hence. God's worke in hand will goe on, yett I question by what hands, for selfe, self-interest will dash it in pieces ; the Lord knowes that sinne raignes too much at this tyme.' Such a letter as this must have been read and read again by the little company of English exiles.

---

[1] 'Philip of Pembroke, the loud-voiced Chancellor of Oxford, is dead.' Carlyle's *Cromwell*, vol. iii. p. 140.

Amongst his wandering fellow-countrymen who passed through the town, none had been more welcome at Sir Ralph's board than the lighthearted and eccentric Sir Henry Newton, who had found so much in common with Mary's ready wit and merry humour. The friendship was of long standing, as Sir Henry's father, Adam Newton, had been a colleague of Sir Edmund Verney's in the households of Prince Henry and Prince Charles. Sir Adam Newton married Catherine, sister of Sir Thomas Puckering (or Pickering), Bart., M.P. for Tamworth in the parliaments of 1620 to 1627. The carrying off of Sir Thomas

Puckering's daughter and heiress by Joseph Walsh in October 1649, while walking with her maids close to her own home, was one of the *causes célèbres* of the day.[1] Sir Henry Newton after his last visit to Blois had gone off to Holland to look after this poor girl, 'a certaine Cosen of mine, Mrs. Jane Puckering, that was stolen away out of Grenwich parke last Michelmas, by the Walshes of Worcestershire, who forcing her upon landing to say something for their advantage, sue her upon a marriage, and have made a shift to gett her into a Monastery at Newport [Nieuport] where shee is a perfect prisoner, and in great distresse.'

To carry off an heiress and force her into a marriage had been no uncommon feat for the wilder spirits amongst the young Cavaliers; but the Commonwealth, with its anxious provisions for public morality, afforded to women a protection they had never known before. Prompt measures were taken by the Council of State; the difficulties made in Holland about surrendering Mistress Jane were met by a still more peremptory demand. Soon after Sir Henry's visit an English man-of-war was sent over to bring her home, and an indictment of felony was found against Walsh and his companions. Sir Henry inherited her fortune at her death, and took the name of Puckering-Newton.[2] June, 1650

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[1] See *The Interregnum*, by F. A. Inderwick, Q.C., pp. 40, 42, where full details are given.

[2] He often signed himself Henry Puckering before this accession of fortune. Perhaps it was already his Christian name.

On his way to visit Mistress Jane he writes to Sir Ralph in his airy way of a duel he had to fight: 'I mett at sea with a rencontre of a person who bored some few holes in mee at landing, which have done mee this only despight, that they kept me away so much longer then I intended from my Cosen, and you; of two pricks scarcely worth the naming, one of them hath been kind to mee about the belly, but the other now seven weekes in cure I doubt will domineere among the sinewes a moneth longer before I gett my arme at liberty.' This letter was written in ignorance of Dame Mary Verney's death. Sir Henry, who with all his jests and oddities had a warm heart, was shocked to hear of his friend's bereavement on his return to France from Holland. Sept. 1650 He writes to Sir Ralph from Rouen: 'The sound of your sadnesse first struck my eares at Flushing, but heere it strikes my heart to know the truth of it. I was at first unwilling to beleeve so unexpected a misfortune, But now I must not only bee content amongst crosses of all sorts God hath pleas'd to send us, to beare also this unesteemable losse of so noble a friend, But as a friend and hearty sufferer with you must begg of you to beare it patiently, And though the tendernesse of our affections will for some time give way unto our passions, yett upon better consideration our reason must submitt unto God's will, in whose only power[1] it is, to give you comfort at present, or further punishment herafter in the like sort. . . . This fate hath made some changes also in my intentions, butt must make much greater in yours; I did intende my wife for Blois so soone as shee should bee brought to bedd (w^{ch} I expect hourely). But that place now will bee too malencholly for either you or her. . . . I am oblig'd by businesse to stay some dayes in this sick towne, or else, although the wayes are everywhere unsafe for travell, And my owne late indisposition makes mee not altogether so fitt for it, I should have come myselfe in the place of this letter.' The plague was raging at Rouen, whence Sir Henry wrote in September 1650: 'On Tuesday last died 83 persons.'

---

[1] 'Of whose only gift it cometh.' Collect for 13th Sunday after Trinity.

Sir Ralph replies: 'I confesse till now I never knew what sorrow was, this, oh this, farre exceedes all my other misfortunes, and hath put me uppon soe many severall resolutions that now I know not what to resolve uppon. God direct me for the best, my desire is to satisfie my creditors in England and some other occations will tye me, and consequently my children heere this winter. Italy is very much in my thoughts, and I could wish it were not out of yours. . . . Had I not sould my Horses, my coach should come to Rouen to fetch both you and your Family.'

Sir Henry felt that the best service he could render his friend was to go to him at once 'rather than any more to rubb over his sore, at so great distance.'

'If our severall occasions could allow us both to live in the same place, Beleeve it, S^{r}, sans compliment

It is the height of my Ambition, and so you shall beleeve when I shall bee so happie as to show you the bosome of

‘ S^{r}, your faithfull friend and humble servant,
‘ H. PUCKERING.’

Sir Ralph, though he has ‘a passionate desire’ to see so good a friend, declares that he must not think of travelling so far to stay ‘for such a spurt’; but Sir Henry was not to be put off. A month later Sir Ralph acknowledges gratefully the comfort he had derived from his society; he and Mr. Gee had ridden a stage with Sir Henry on his journey back to Paris, and he writes to him from Blois on his return: ‘Deare S^{r}, I long to heare of your safe arrivall, for after wee parted my Horse not only stumbled and Fell, but could not rise againe (as leane and light as I am) till I gott off his Back, and my Coz. Gee was much more troubled with his, soe that we came home somewhat later then wee expected, and I have very much to write to England, neverthelesse I must needes in these few lines expresse some part of my Thankfulnesse for all your favours, and cheifly for your good company at this time of my Distresse; certainly if Mortall man could merrit anything of Heaven, this moneth's Pennance, and your patient enduring of it, would purchasse you a most glorious Place There. . . . that neglecting your owne contentment you rather choose to suffer heere with him, that now you are gon, must againe resume the title of Your most unfortunate, and afflicted servant, Verney.'

Sir Henry's reply is characteristic : ' Sir, though I am out of humour, you ought to bee quite otherwise, for you are ridd of the most troublesome fellow that ever came into your quarters. Therefore bee merry if yew love mee, or if yew love your selfe, and those that love yew. . . . Forgive mee all my faults and troubles to you and the rest of my noble convoy, and conjure them from mee to doe so too, or else If sack and Sugar bee a sin Lord help the wicked that pursued with such violence your Kindnesse to undoe.

' Deare Sir your most affectionate oblig'd humble servant.'

It is refreshing to find that Sir Henry knows his Falstaff, as Shakespeare is so little in fashion that he is seldom quoted in the letters except by Dr. Denton. Sir Henry next writes from Paris concerning an old coat which Sir Ralph has asked him to sell for him : it is difficult to get a good price for it, and no wonder, as 'the moths have been very busie with it ! ' 'Our English Louvre Lords are gone to Fontainebleau,' writes Sir Henry ; ' I doe not know their errand . . . . there was whispering (and some say crying) at the Louvre for the King's leaving their partie in Scotland, and going God knowes whither, but God knowes too how true it is, though I heard it amongst our greatest intelligencers. . . . I languish for a mate at chesse, more than a woman [Lady Newton has evidently arrived], therefore cannot but reflect upon the pleasures I had with you. . . . My Lord Jermin is going to the Hague, to condole and congratulate [the Prince of Orange had died of small-pox], which are such contrarieties that you and I (I doubt) are not courtiers enough to undertake.'

Sir Henry refers to Sir Ralph's 'morall counsells and divine w^ch^ you know, proceeding from you, I observe as religiously as any Canons of the Church. . . . My service to all the Noble Squiers of the Strong fire side fromage table; where give mee leave (at least) to envie you amidst your storys, your divinitie and Mathematicks, drinking my health, and judging, not the twelve tribes of Israel (like my lord Goring) but mee, for neither fish nor flesh nor good redd hering.' We come upon one of the French chess-players again, Monsieur Poppein (or Pappin), many years later in a letter from Sir Ralph at Claydon promising 'to attend the Earl of Salisbery about your businesse, and truly I will doe my best to serve you in it, and doe not despaire of good successe, 'tis a sad thing that any Englishman should give you soe much trouble, considering your affection and readinesse to serve the nation.' **March 1659**

Sir Ralph receives some more friends at Blois during that autumn: 'Charles Needham my very good acquaintance and a fine youth' and Sir Philip Mountaine are there; Mr. Ayloffe and my Lord Downe; and Lord Falkland, whose society was most uncongenial to Sir Ralph and who must have differed widely from his father, famed not only for his 'prodigious parts of learning,' but for his 'inimitable sweetness and delight in conversation.' 'My Lord and his roaring Boyes are just as you left them,' he writes to Mr. Ayloffe, 'the old trade goes on still, they are noe changlings I assure you, but here are now some others (of more yeares and other tempers) with whose conversation I am sure my Lord Downe and you would have been very much pleased.' Mr. Ayloffe takes up the phrase and presents his respects to 'my Lord Faulkland and his roring boys.'[1] Sept. 30, 1650 Does Dr. Denton refer to the same delightful family party when he writes in answer to a letter of Sir Ralph's, from Blois: 'I am sorry for my Lord, for doubtless she is Styx, Acheron, Phlegeton, Cerberus una sibi, and I am sorry for his daughter, for certainly many piggs are better kept and bred'? Giles, Lord Allington, 'that knight of the sun,' and Mr. Harrison 'his governour,' Mr. Hussey, and 'Count Hide' are also mentioned as staying at Blois.

Sir Ralph receives a cheerful letter from the Hon. Hatton Rich, stepson of his old friend, Lady Warwick, from the lodgings which he and Mary formerly occupied at Tours: 'Your friend Antoinette, and all the rest heere, kisse your hands, but if they should know that you will not allow them to be belles, I beleive it would breede ill blood betwixt you.

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[1] Lord Falkland after the Restoration published *The Marriage Night*, a comedy, doubtless in the taste of the roaring boys of the period.

I have formerly comended the Hay for good people, but indeed, these are soe far before them, as ther's noe comparison, and for the good old man heere, he doth soe confound me wth Civillities, both by words and actions, that if he was an old woman, I thinke verily I should marry him. Now I come to tell you perticulars: first, for outward Ceremony, he will hardly put on his hat w^{ith} out I use my Rethoricke w^{ith} him, hardly eat a bit of meate w^{ith} out I face him to it, then if he sees that I doe not eate, he is alwaies Chiding his daughters that they doe not get me that I like, soe, that I am forc't to eate 'till I burst againe, although I have no Appetite; and alwaies laugh though I am malancholy, lest they should think something displeas'd mee; he hath heard that I borrowed mony sometimes at the Hay, he hath ask't my man forty times already, whether I want any, and that all he hath is at my service, soe that I thinke I must be fain to borrow mony of him, least he should take it ill of mee (but pray let not my Lord Willoughby know that, least he should againe dune mee), for Rolic apart, they are the best people in the world.'

On Christmas Day a party of the English exiles met at dinner, and Sir Henry Newton writes from Rouen that he would gladly have made their number 31, instead of 30. He still retains an affectionate remembrance of the noble company at Blois, 'who if they were to be purchased with gold, I would not grudge to give my bookes, or the wayte of them for

Mr. Gee, for Mr. Cordell and Mr. du Val, but chiefly for Sir Ralph I would give myselfe.' As he could not keep his Christmas among friends and Cavaliers, Sir Henry proposes to himself, as an action of charity suited to the day, to try and forgive the Presbyterians ; but he feels this to be almost an impossible task, and cheers himself with the assurance 'that God Almighty will not.' When he thinks of Sir Ralph and 'that good Mr. Cordell,' he feels that 'Blois must thrive for Obed-Edom's house.' Better days were coming for this cheerful philosopher ; he lived to see the Presbyterians driven out, and to enjoy a good fat sinecure himself, when the King came to his own again.

Amongst the English exiles to whom Sir Ralph showed kindness were several old friends, distressed clergymen of the Church of England—Dr. Morley, Cosin, Dean of Peterborough ('since L^{d} Bishop of Durham'), and Dr. Creighton, afterwards Bishop of Bath and Wells. Sir Ralph wrote to Dr. Cosin at Paris apologising for sending him 'a little Box with 40 Livres in it,' a sum he and Mary could ill spare, however small it appeared compared with the merits and necessities of one 'that had formely enjoyed and soe well deserved a great part of our Churches Patrimony.' Dr. Cosin thanked him for the gift and the privacy with which it was conveyed to him. May 17 1650 'Whatever my want be, you have made yo^{r} oblation at an Altar, where I shall never want an Eucharist for you, w^{ch} being all y^{e} Retribution y^{t} I am able to make you, you wil be pleased to accept from him, whose most hearty pray'rs are daily offered up unto God for you.'

Dean Cosin was a constant preacher at Sir Richard Browne's chapel at Paris, that great meeting-place of the English Protestant exiles, and was therefore well known to them all. Evelyn, who met him again in 1663 as the rich and powerful Prince Bishop of Durham, complains that 'he little remember'd in his greatnesse those that had been kind and assisted him in his exile.' But in 1650, and for many years after, he was in sad distress. Lord Hatton writes of him in 1654: 'Mr. Deane Cosins is exceeding ill . . . wee shall be sencible of his loss when he is gone. He is exceeding poore . . . even to the want of necessityes for his health and hath not anything heere coming in, for officiating at the Residents weekely, and with the Duke of Gloucester dayly.'[1]

Dr. Cosin had been ordered by Charles I. to draw up a book of private devotions for the Protestant ladies of the Court, reproached by the Queen's French ladies with having no breviaries.[2] This little book, called by the Puritans 'Cosin's cosining Devotions,' as having a Romish flavour, he hastened to send to Sir Ralph when he heard of his bereavement, and Sir Ralph appreciated it highly.

There is also a pleasant correspondence with Sir

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[1] See *Nicholas Papers*, vol. ii. p. 102, Camden Society.

[2] See *Evelyn's Diary* for October 1, 1651.

Richard Browne and Elizabeth his wife. Sir Ralph sent them some fruit—'a Box of Blois grapes, and a Box of Sour Prunes, St. Catherine's; . . . a trifle, but the best I can now get'—and presented Sir Richard Hastings to them. The minister thanks him for 'his noble token. . . . Our letters from Ingland speake of Crumwell's cumminge over shortly, His Majesties remove from Jersey is nott yett resolved, neyther the time, nor place, God direct him in all his undertakings, and give you and yours all the happinesse can be wished you.' Jan. 26, 1650

When Luce Sheppard and her little charges passed through Paris, Lady Browne was kind to them; and charged Luce to find at Blois, perhaps at the great annual fair, some fur which she could not buy in Paris. Luce failed to do so, but Sir Ralph, glad to show Lady Browne any mark of respect, came to the rescue. 'Madame,' he writes, 'Finding by Luce, you had occation for some Fur, and that she could not fit you in this Towne, I haveing such a one, as I guessed might possibly serve your turne (though I could not then come at it) have adventured to send it now, togeather with some other odd Trifles w^ch^ I must beeseech you to accept, though I confesse they are not worth receiving. Madame, had I not a very greate experience of your goodnesse, I should not have presumed to tender such inconsiderable Toyes as these, to a person of your Meritt.' Nov. 24, 1650

Sir Ralph keeps a note that 'with this letter I sent her:

A greate White Furr to cover a Bedd.
2 Paires of Frenchpain Gloves.
12 Paires of Eng : White Gloves.
12 yrds of Eng : Scarlet Ribbon, 6 penny Broad, and
12 yrds of 2 penny Broad to it.
A paire of Scarlet silk stockings, with a paire of Turkey Garters to them.
An excellent Spanish pocket cover with Scarlet Taffaty, and a Box of Dried Grapes with 4 laires 3 p. besides the Box.'

A gentleman might now hesitate to send to the wife of the English Ambassador at Paris 'a paire of scarlet silk stockings, with a paire of Turkey Garters to them'; but in such evil days Lady Browne took these additions to her wardrobe in very good part, lamented the 'small capacity' she and her husband now had to serve Sir Ralph, and signed herself 'untill some happy opportunity of Requitall, in all gratefullnesse' his most obliged humble servant. Her son and daughter are also Sir Ralph's humble servants. This daughter was the wife of John Evelyn; during his absence, to settle his affairs in England, she remained for a time at Paris, 'yet very young, under the care of an excellent lady and prudent mother.'[1] Lady Browne did not long enjoy her great white fur rug: she went to England the next summer for her daughter's confinement, and soon after caught scarlet fever and died—'an excellent and virtuous lady,' says her son-in-law, 'having been so obliging on all occasions, to those who continually frequented her house in Paris, which was not only an hospital, but an asylum to all our persecuted and afflicted countrymen, during eleven years' residence there in that honourable situation.'

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[1] *Evelyn's Diary*, September 10, 1647, and September 22, 1652.

Sir Ralph was fond of pictures, as befitted a man who had known Cornelius Jansen and Vandyke, and was held to be somewhat of a connoisseur.

Susan Alport, his eldest sister, was ambitious to collect as many family pictures as possible in her own room at Overton Manor. She is to have 'Doctor's goode face' and wants Ralph's portrait and Mary's to be done 'both of a bigness.'

A commission that gave Sir Ralph much more trouble was one from Margaret, formerly Mrs. Cary, now the wife of Sir Edward Herbert.[1] As with Lady Browne, Sir Ralph's civilities first take the form of a box of Blois grapes and 'a Box of Plumbes, St. Katherin, from Tours.' Lady Herbert was living in Paris, where Jean Petitot's fame as a miniature painter on enamel had made these exquisite little portraits the fashion of the day. The Genevan goldsmith won his reputation in England, in the palmy days of Charles I.'s patronage of art. Lodged at Whitehall under the charge of Sir Edmund Verney as Knight Marshal, Petitot had gained fresh colours from

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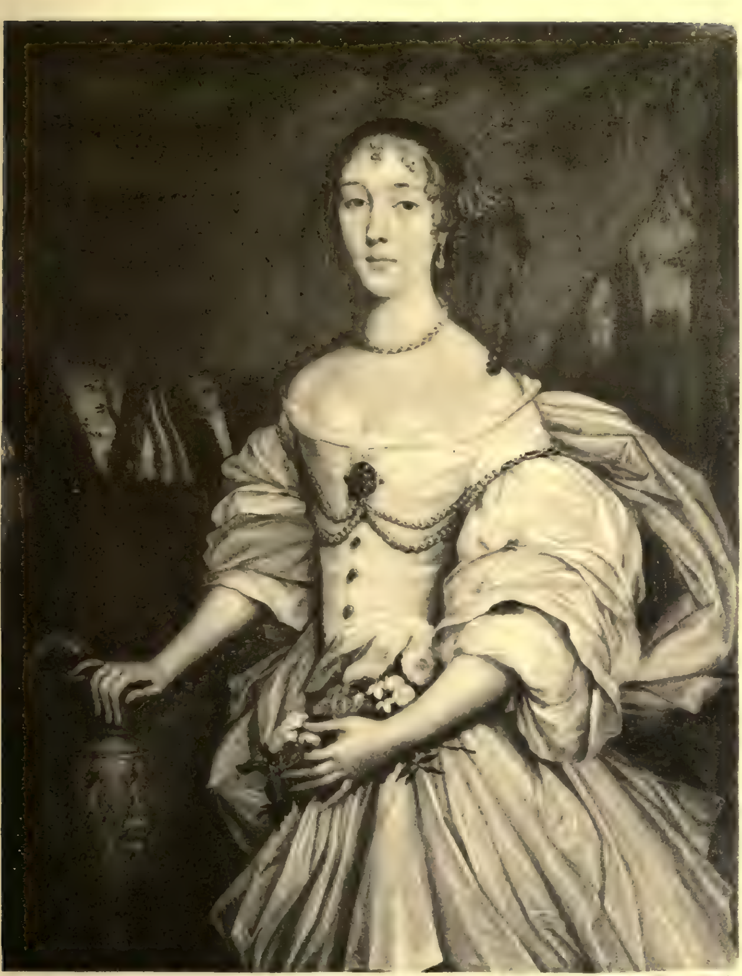
[1] Sir Edward Herbert had been Attorney-General to Charles I., and was made Lord Keeper by Charles II. in 1653.

Mayerne's knowledge of chemistry, and Vandyke himself had superintended his work. He accompanied the exiled English Court to Paris, where Louis XIV. lodged him in the Louvre, and the most distinguished people in Europe came to him to be painted. Evelyn mentions one of his enamels as amongst 'his Majestie's rarities' at Windsor. Dame Margaret Herbert, who brought to the patronage of art the frugal mind of a British matron, required Sir Ralph to find for her in the provinces as good a painter as Petitot at half his price. Sir Ralph felt the task to be an impossible one, though Blois had kept its fame for goldsmith's work, and some faint afterglow of its Renaissance glory; he had too true an appreciation of Petitot's genius.

Dame Margaret Herbert writes in April 1650: 'If my picture of Vandike be with you, I pray speak with the man that did S^r^ Richard Hastingses watche, to see at what rate he will make one in amell. I would have all the Picture, and desier to have it exactly donne, for it is for a person that is very curious.'

May 5, 1650

Sir Ralph replies: 'According to your command I have shewed your pickture, and I think you meane to have a picture, not a watch, yet I am not absolutely certaine, because your words are these (I pray speake with the man that did S^r^ Richard Hastings' watch, to see at what Rate hee will make one in Enamell); now if you intend a Pickture, hee tells mee hee will doe his best endeavour to please,



Walker & Boutall Ph. Sc.

Marg: Herbert

from a painting by Vandyke at Claydon House.

the gold will come to at least 15 livres, and (being it must be so well donn, and must have all the Pickture in it) hee will have seaven pistolls meerely for his paynes, he saies hee had 5 of S^r R: Hastings, besides the gold, and that was but ye middle, but in this must bee both your hands, a Dogg, a chaire, and Trees which is much more worke, but some little part of the 4 corners (and the Body of the dog is at one of them) must needes bee left out, because the origenall is square, and I presume you intend his coppy shall bee ovall. . . . Be pleased to send me the size in paper, and what kinde of loope you would have made at y^e Topp to fasten it by, and whether there shall bee any thinge at the Bottome to hang gems on, and what other directions you thinke fit.'

Mary Verney's death at Blois, and Lady Herbert's confinement at Paris, interrupted the correspondence, but she resumed it on July 22, 1650.

'Sir, If you can boro so much time of your sad thoughts you will doe me a favour to gett my picture made in amell.' Sir Ralph's letter had not shaken Dame Margaret's orthography, which, like her taste in art, was all her own. 'For the sise I leave to the workman's discreation, only I desier bothe the hands may be donne. I would have no ring at the bottom only one at the top to hang it by, and on the back side flowers or anything he can doe best. I hope hee will doe it as well as Pettito, which I should be very glad of, for he has used me very ill.'

Sir Ralph believes that 'whosoever drawes yours heere you must expect to have it as farre short of Pettito's Worke, as Johnson's [Jansen's] was of Vandike's. I am very sorry that Pettito hath used you ill, for I meant to intreate your care of one or two that (if hee bee not too deere) I intended hee should draw for mee. I am sure you can tell his Lowest price, and how long hee is usually about one of the ordinary size that he copies after Vandike.'

Aug. 18, 1650 Lady Herbert replies : 'I shall desier the picture may be donne, by him that works best thear, Pettito dos none under 15 pistoels [a pistol was worth about 16*s.*]. I imployed him to do the Prinses Sopias picture, and after 6 monthes expectation he brought it me so ill donne, that I did not take it, the truthe was it was donne by his companion who dos now most of his work [his brother-in-law Bordier], and if you will have any thing from him I cannot promise you better dealing, for I thought I deserved more respect from him. When he fail'd me, I gott the picture copied in liming by one that did it rarely, the same man has donne some things in amell. I am very confident he will out doe Pettito. I tould him you desired to have some donne and he is content to undertake it, if it be a picture of Vandike's he must doe it after, els he will not trouble himself with it.'

Sir Ralph finds the Blois artist as dear as Petitot, and all work is suspended during the grape gathering. Sept. 18, 1650 'I hate to have anything stik long in his Fingers, but when he begins it I beeseech you bee pleased to assure your selfe I shall take as greate, nay a greater care about the doing of it, then if it were my owne, and if my dilligence could contribute any thing to its perfection, night and day the Painter should bee Haunted by, Madam, Your most faithfull though most unfortunate servant, VERNEY.'

The painter must have had a lively time of it, with Sir Ralph's visits and Dame Margaret's suggestions and economies. 'Sir,' she writes on receiving the sketch for her miniature, 'I thinck that whear the head is bigest, will be best if he can make any thing come over that arme that wants the hand, a pees of the scarf as I have marked it with the pen, or els to make the head of the dog come up in that holow between the arm and the body, but beeing he leaves out so much of the picture, me thinks he should bate something off his prise, which as I remember was 7 pistolls, that which is making hear is finish't all but some little touches, and is in my opinion far beyond any thing ever Petitto did. I am told Petito dos none now under 20 pistolls of the bigest sise I sent you.' Whether the lady, the dog, the chair, and trees were all got into the little enamel, we do not hear; but it is not surprising that Petitot found it hard to satisfy her ladyship's 'curiosity.'

The Blois artist accomplished only a partial success. The gold sank in the middle. The colours of the 'origenall are grown yellow, but I think he hath made the Flesh of this to Gray, Good Madame, let me heare how you like it in all points, and let not this man's ill fortune, or want of skill, make you beeleeve Dec. 1650

I did not conjure him to doe his utmost.' This is not the only bargaining we hear of with an artist; Dec. 6, 1653 'Cary is very desirous of your picture,' writes Brother Stewkley to Sir Ralph, 'but is troubled to heare that sitting is a posture you like not, hee that drew plans, lives in the new street by Cursitor ally a Dutch man, his name is Ruse, my brother paid him *3l.*, as I take it for frame and case and all.'

Sir Ralph's letters from England were sad enough; public affairs were very unsettled, and each member of the family had his or her own troubles: 'Elmes hath Tom in prison uppon 2 suites. . . . Betty wants cloathes and there is a small crosse caper about her going to Pegg; D^r made Pegg cry about it and will bee at her againe, Harry also told her her owne, as D^r heares.'

Penelope's baby only lived long enough 'to be maid a Christian sole.' Mary needed an 'adishon' to her allowance, and Henry is so unpleasant that Sir Ralph will rather 'dispise the Deedes of such a desperate Dick, then suffer himselfe to be dared out of anything.'

Dr. Denton sent him news of the death of an old Nov. 14, 1650 friend. 'Y^r letter came to me att Giddy Hall . . . . in a sad home S^r Charles beinge newly dead, he died very willingly and excellently well to the great admiration of all, and God's strength appeared in his weakness wonderfully, for for many houres togeather he was in a most heavenly extasie. And he died as much and more a Courtier then ever I sawe, paying great civilities most heavenly by way of praier and benediction to wife, children, kindred, servants and friends. It is a sad story to tell y^{u} how ill his children and debts are left, both he and his wife and divers others thought the younger children had beene particularly provided for by 400^{l} per Ann. and for ought I see by any deeds that yett appeare they had only a power to provide for them but it not beinge executed they have not one groat left them. S^{r} Charles his sickness was a spotted feaver ; . . . he is to be buried in Suffolke and I find my lady will as you, beare all the charges of coaches, horses and men.' Sir Henry Newton wrote to Sir Ralph in December : 'I am heavily sensible of poor Charles Gaudy's death, though comforted among his friends, that as hee lived so honest a Cavalier, hee died so good a Christian.'

Sir Ralph was planning a journey to Italy : he would allow himself three months to wind up his affairs, then give his address to none but the Doctor and Sir Roger, with power to the Doctor to burn his letters. The tangle of debts between himself and young Edmund Denton is so complicated that he writes in despair : 'It shall not bee longer in hand then the distance we are at doth necessarily require, but if all that I can write, shall bee called a labarinth and scrupulous, and looked uppon as meerely dillatory, I can say noe lesse then that *None are soe blinde as those that will not see.*'

Sir Ralph had considered, soon after he became a widower, whether he ought not to sell Claydon ; the market is so glutted with the sale of 'Church lands, Crowne lands, and Malignants' Estates' that Claydon would sell cheap. 'But if there is no other remedy,' he writes, 'I had rather sell it all, then a part of it, and if it must goe, the sooner tis gonn the more money will bee left. And if I must bee soe unhappy, I wish I knew it now, for if I sell this land, I shall forever bid adieu to England, and then I would not burry my deare wife there, for whensoever it pleaseth God to call me to him, I much desire, and (as shee did) shall make it my request, to have my Bones burried by hers (and if I tooke care for that, she bid mee lay her where I pleased), soe that when our soules and bodies shall be reunited, wee may goe hand in hand to Heaven togeather. And tho' that in the resurrection none marry nor are given in Marriage, yet I hope (without being censured for curiosity) I may piously beleeve, that Wee who ever from our very childhoods lived in soe much peace, and christian concord heere on Earth, shall alsoe in our Elder yeares for the full compleating of our Joyes, at least be knowne to one another in Heaven. And I assure you D^r^ as the confidence of this is one of the greatest comforts I now enjoy, soe the contemplation thereof (even when I am almost swallowed up of Loud sorrow) yeelds some measure of contentment to your most afflicted freinde.'

CHAPTER II.

SIR RALPH ON HIS TRAVELS.

1651-1653.

Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart untravell'd fondly turns to thee.—GOLDSMITH.

THE three months Sir Ralph had given himself to wind up his money matters had extended to six, and yet the business seemed but little advanced ; however, in March 1651, he is making his last preparations at Blois for a prolonged tour.

His continued absence from England was a great grief to the two faithful friends, Dr. Denton and Sir Roger Burgoyne, who had shown him a love scarcely less devoted and tender than that of Mary herself. They had hoped that when the sad business devolving upon him after her death was finished, he would turn his thoughts homewards. But Sir Ralph still felt that he might be imperilling his personal liberty by returning, and in the unsettled state of politics in England he could not see his way to taking any share in public life. With his attachment to the Church of England and his horror of government by the sword, he was out of sympathy with Cromwell; and after stoutly resisting Charles I., he was still less likely to be attracted by the coterie of intriguing Royalists with their squabbles and jealousies at the Hague or in Paris—'the Louvre Lords,' as Sir Henry Newton contemptuously calls them. Added to this he shrank from taking up his home life again without his wife's help. He had only visited Claydon in a hurried and uncomfortable way, since it had passed into his possession on the fatal day of Edgehill.

Sir Roger, after a sharp attack of illness, was 'most longingly expecting' the happiness of a meeting. 'I have not of late been used to a pen, I must not venture too farr, my head gives a check to my hand, and will give leave no further then to tell thee, my deare heart, that I am Thine beyond expression.' When he hears Sir Ralph's decision, Sir Roger protests that it is enough to throw him into a fresh distemper. 'Mee thinks in these darke times,' he writes, 'a neerer application of friends one to another whould be more proper, and I am sure more comfortable; but for my friend after such a tedious absence yet to turne his back upon us, and still to play the pilgrim in wandring further from us, I assure thee it is the subject not only of my sorrow but astonishment; well I must subscribe to the wisest man, the eye is never sattisfied of seing. You are now going to see the pope, I am confident that the next will be the turke.' Dr. Denton writes: 'I rec'd yours of $\frac{1}{2}{}^{2}$ March 165$\frac{1}{0}$ which brought me the cold and comfortlesse newes of your beginninge your travells, but when I consider God's presence is every where guidinge and protectinge, and that he is a God both of the Hills and of the valleys, and that even in the wildernes (whither he leads his owne) his great wonders he manifested to his first borne people there, It is a great inducement to me to encourage my selfe in my Lord and my God, and to beleeve that he will be with you in all the ways wherin you goe, and amonge all the people through whom you passe. I pray date your letters from the place you write that I may know which way you steere your course.'

In January 1651 Sir Ralph went for a short time to Rouen and Paris, leaving Mun and Jack with Luce Sheppard. 'Since your departure from hence,' writes Mr. Cordell, 'I have been like the weather all sad and cloudie, and scarce able to speak in jest or good earnest.' Mun is clamorous in his lamentations; nothing went well, he declared, when his father was away: he had paid the fencing-master according to his orders; Prenost, who teaches him to draw, quite neglects his duty; he has never worked at Sir Ralph's portrait since he left, he always arrives late to give Mun his lesson, and never stays his hour. He acknowledges his obligations to Mr. Cordell; a year would not suffice to thank him for all the kindness he had shown him. He desires to send 'mes baise-mains' to Sir Henry Newton, who was a favourite with the children, and often inquired of Sir Ralph, 'How doe my two great friends, your two little young men?'

'Monsieur et mon très honoré père, Plust à Dieu qu'il vous donnast la pensée de retourner à Blois, les jours me semblent des années tant il m'ennuye d'ettre icy comme dans un desert de solitude ; car quoy est cequi me peut desormais plaire dans cette ville, comment est ceque cette lumière de la vie, et cette respiration de l'air me peuvent elle estre agreables, puisqu'y ayant perdu cequi m'estoit le plus au Monde, et qu'il m'interesse plus qu'une seule personne dont je suis privé de l'honneur de sa presence, au reste graces à Dieu nous nous porte fort bien, et pourcequi est de moy je vous asseure que je ne manqueray jamais à mon devoir c'espourquoy finissant je demeure et demeureray aternellement

'Vostre très humble et fidel
'fils EDMOND VERNEY.

**'Blois dimanche le 5
'de feuvrier 1651.'**

Sir Ralph was doubting whether to take his eldest boy to Italy ; he cannot afford a tutor as well as a travelling servant, and 'a French Preceptor is fitter than an English and more useful ; 'tis better be without than take an ill one.' He thinks 'Mun is too young to profit by his travel, and his Body too thin to endure it' ; but his piteous appeals seem to have turned the scale. A few years later, when there was any question of his spending an hour with Mary Eure, Sir Ralph could not hope for his son's society ; but this heroine of a romantic chapter of Mun's youth was still in pinafores ; he had now all a schoolboy's contempt for girls, and vehemently objected to be left with Luce Sheppard and the little ones, when he had been used to the society of his father and his father's friends.

So it was decided that 'the young gallant,' as Sir Roger called him, should go on the grand tour. Sir Ralph gave up his house, settled Luce and her two little gentlewomen in 'Chambres garnies' at Madame Juselier's, sent 'poore Jack' to Madame Testard, widow of the Protestant pasteur, where he was to board and attend classes under Luce's superintendence. Sir Ralph took his pleasures sadly, and he prayed the Doctor, if any accident should befall him, to extend all love and care to his children 'for their mother's sake who is now a Saint in Heaven. If I could possibly meete with some good friend, whose designe (like mine) were to seeke his Fortune in a Foreigne Land, it might bee a comfort and advantage to us both, but considering how unfortunate I have lately beene, in the losse of my most deare, most incomparable companion, how can I thinke to meete with any man soe miserable as my selfe.' Cousin Gee eventually went with him, and fulfilled the required conditions very fairly; a widower, like Sir Ralph, he is described as given over to 'melancholy thoughts,' and 'in Love with Carthusian silence.' Mr. Gee had evidently been popular with Sir Henry Newton, because he had been content, when they met at Blois, to leave to that talkative gentleman the burden of the conversation.

Sir Ralph speaks of himself as so old and worn out with sorrows that we need to be reminded that at this time he was only 37. It does not sound as if the society in the coach had been very lively for Mun, but at 14 it is a great consolation to be treated as a grown-up person.

They were joined later on by 'Mr. Cordell and his company,' a party of young Englishmen to whom he was acting as tutor; 'Mr. Bartie and his brother, Mr. Richard,' are mentioned, and a young English servant called Germaine. M. Duval rejoices to hear that Sir Ralph is to have Mr. Cordell's company, 'la conversation duquel adoucira en quelque sorte les Incommodités de votre Voyage.'

No definite plans were made, but letters from England were to be addressed first: 'For Mr. Raphe Smith, à Monsieur Monsieur Remy, chez Monsieur Le Sueur Sculpteur de Roy, aux Maraiz du Temple, Rue de Bretagne, au Soleil levant, à Paris'; and afterwards, 'Chez Monsieur Le Sueur, Rue des graveliers vis à vis de la petite Hotte'; then to await his arrival 'chez Mons^{r} Mons^{r} Cesar Gras, Marchand Bourgeois, prôche le plastre à Lyon.' 'Mr. Gape's men, Henry Foukes and Francis Lloyd, are to send him the Diurnalls weekly.'

Sir Roger Burgoyne writes to Sir Ralph in May: 'Sir, I shall now longe to heare of a setlednesse in your resolutione for one place or other. I shall desire thee to make all the hast thou canst back againe, as may stand with the gravity of the father and the youth of the sonne, I trust that betweene you both you will trace it very orderly.' 'Orderly,' Sir Ralph was sure to be, and there is a careful list of the clothes that Luce Sheppard is to send after them to Lyons, including—'6 Fine night capps Laced marked V in black silke, and 2 Fine night capps plaine,' to frame his lean care-worn cheeks when the majestic wig was taken off at night; and '4 new plaine capps, marked V in Blew silke,' to surround Mun's fresh, boyish face, such as we see it yet in a picture painted the following year; many elaborate shirts with lace and 'New Cambrick double Ruffe Cuffes, marked V in blew thread,' which must have been a great anxiety to pack; '5 paires of little Holland Cuffes for Mun, 3 Paires of Cambrick double Boot-hose'; a large number of 'fine Holland Handkerchers Buttoned' which would be puzzling to the modern nose; '2 Tufted Holland Wastcoates Lined'; '2 Dimothy Wastcoates'; '4 Face Napkins'; and in case of accidents, '2 old Handkerchers and 2 paires of old Linnen Stockings.' Later a 'Black trunke with 3 lockes and Wooden Barres' is packed at Lyons, to go on to Florence, and Sir Ralph keeps a careful list of its contents. There was a great deal of the heavy mourning which the etiquette of grief required: 'Black cloath Doublets,' new and old; 'Black Breeches and Cloake, Blacke Cloath Cape for a Cloake, and 2 other peeces of Blacke Cloath; Black Hats and Hat-bands; old Blacke Tafaty garters, and new Black ribbon roses; and severall peeces' of extra crape.

Even the shades of night and the privacy of the bedchamber did not allow of any relaxation of woe; Sir Ralph could hardly take his black bed about with him, but he did take '2 Black Taffaty night-cloathes, with the Black night capps, and Black comb and brush and two Black sweet-baggs[1] to it, and the Slippers of Black Velvet,' one 'Greate Fustian Dressing Wastcoate,' and 'Blacke Paper.' There were more coverings for the head than ever: '6 serge under-capps and 6 Browne callico under-capps,' to be worn by day when the wig was taken off; and, besides, '3 plaine new night capps coarse,' and '30 Fine Peaked night capps,' there are '2 Night Periwiggs.' The complexion is also cared for; there is 'Muske for powder, ciprus Powder, and a Puffe.' His toilet equipment includes '12 Tortus shell Agendas, 2 gold picktooths, Hair Powder, 2 Paires new Barbing Larmes, sizars, and 3 Head-rubbers.'

Sir Ralph was virtuously anxious to provide for repairs, as he took a 'Black Leather needle-case with a greate gold Bodkin, Papers of Pinns, Blew Thread, Shirt Buttons and old White Round Buttons, Cap-strings, and Tape'; but none of the honourable company seemed capable of making use of them, and after some months' absence from Luce's needles and threads, there are lamentable entries of black silk stockings of which only one is whole, and of '2 Night Cloathes burned, and one old one without Buttons.'

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[1] 'Sweet-bag: a small silk bag filled with spices, used as a cosmetic' (Halliwell's *Dictionary of Archaic Words*).

There are '3 papers about Phisick'; 'Sir R. Hastings' plaster for a straine,' and Luce laments that Sir Ralph has not been able to take with him his 'rose water, rose viniger, and elder viniger,' as most necessary to his comfort 'whare you intend to passe your winter.' There is very little jewelry: a few rings, 'whereof one hath 3 Diamonds like harts'; '2 silver rings of Munn's'; and a 'Bundle' of Mary's hair. Dr. Kirton at Florence thanks him for a gift of the new Paris luxury, 'the Teeth Brushes and Boxes,' but Sir Ralph replies that 'These are such inconsiderable Toyes, that I must intreate you to speake no more of them.'

'Sir, I pray tell me,' he writes to Dr. Kirton, 'if it bee soe dangerous as 'tis reported, to bring an English Bible and a small booke or two of Devotion; some tell me the bookes will not only bee forfeeted, but a man may bee put into very greate trouble about them, and that the Searchers may search our pockets, and doe alwais search all Trunks and cloak Baggs for such matters. Some say 'tis better to send them before, or to cause them to bee sent over after I am there, with an addresse to some English gentleman that lately come from thence, and then if any question bee made about them, noe body can suffer in it, because neither that he sent them, nor hee that they are addressed unto, is within theire reach; I pray Sir, Bee pleased to assist and direct me in this businesse, and burne my letter least it should bee knowne, for the very discoursing of it, may make it Oct. 1650 more difficult, and I assure you the well ordering of this, will both hasten and conduce much to my contentment in the Jorney, for when I am alone, though I take noe pleasure in Controversies in matters of Religion, yet I canot well bee any where for such a space of time, in this sad and sorrowfull condition without these few Bookes which are but helpes to devotion.'

In May Sir Ralph and his son are at Montpellier, famous for 'pure ayre and faire women,' having passed through Bordeaux, Toulouse, Carcassonne, 'and divers of the best towns in Languedoc,' 'the violence of the Plague and Famine' prevented their intended visit to the North of Spain, and they settled down for some weeks at Lyons, where Sir Ralph provided Mun with a Latin master and devoted himself to answering the great budget of business letters that awaited him. The Spanish army encamped near Turin, and the 'multitude of peasants in Savoye which practise the trade of bandittis, more dangerous to travellers then the Spaniards,' make it difficult to reach Milan. Sir Ralph found Toulon and the towns on the Rhone intolerably hot in July and August, but he had a horror of Switzerland, mountain scenery being too rude for the elegant taste of a gentleman of the seventeenth century. Roger North wrote of the soft beauty of the Lake country: 'We went through a plain but stony road, in the view of hideous mountains.' If this was the effect of Westmoreland, the Alps could only have been repulsive and terrible objects.

Evelyn, who also left England in the winter of 1643, and was tossed about by the same November storms that kept Sir Ralph and Mary so long waiting to cross the Channel, has left us a vivid picture of the discomforts of Swiss travelling. The age of flannel shirts and homespuns was not yet, and it seems an irreverence even to fancy Sir Ralph stumbling through 'an ocean of snow' on a pass, in his Paris periwig, his 'new Cambrick double ruffe cuffes,' and his 'tufted Holland Wastcoate'; or laying his 'Fine peaked Nightcap' to rest on the coarse sacking of the Swiss 'beds stuffed with leaves' thrown down on the mud floors, 'or in cupboards so high from the ground that they climbed them by a ladder.' Nor was the coach better fitted to encounter 'the greate cataract of mealted snow and other waters,' which poured down Alpine roads after a sudden storm, than he himself was to put up with such 'infamous, wretched lodgings.'

This September the echoes of the Battle of Worcester brought dismay to the various knots of English exiles abroad; and though that stout Parliamentarian Sir Roger Burgoyne wrote exultingly of 'a late and very remarkable providence of God in reference to our Parliament forces,' and 'the absolute overthrow of our enemies'; to the unwarlike Sir Ralph it was a great sorrow to hear of more English blood being spilt by English hands. Sir Ralph reaches Florence in October, where he is delighted with 'the Duke of Florence's garden of

Simples, his gallerie of rareities of all sorts,' and all the 'Miracles of art'; but it is 'a deare Towne for strangers'; Sienna he finds 'a cheape place to live in'; Naples 'a noble rich kingdome but a bad people,' the Spaniards courteous, the Italians cloudy and jealous.

The new 'Turkish drink,' coffee, is just coming into fashion, '2 spoonfuls in a pint of boiling water boiled by a soft fire half an hour.' Sir Ralph prefers taking it cold. Seals and stones for rings are much in request at home, and 'one Col. Atkins in Florence, at Mr. Amies the English House, hath more varietyes for stones with seales, then all Italy besides' Dorothy Osborne tells us how the fair Sacharissa wears 'twenty strung upon a ribbon, like the nuts boys play withal,' 'the oldest and oddest are most prized'; 'oreng Flowers dried for sweetbags, are also in request.'

Sir Ralph spent Christmas of 1651 at Rome, and returned thither for four months after a visit to Naples. He studied Italian, in which he found it difficult to converse, and both he and Mr. Cordell took much interest in Italian politics. Rome was very full; the old Pope Innocent X. was occupied with building on a magnificent scale, entertaining Spanish and Austrian princes, beheading a treacherous secretary (Moscambruno) and his accomplices, and ornamenting Ponte Sant' Angelo with their bodies.

Among the travellers there was a little quiet gossip of the kind supposed to be proper to women.

Mr. Gee was not looked upon as a marrying man, but Monsieur Duval was convinced that there had been some tender passages between Mr. Cordell and Luce Sheppard. When she first announced their arrival in France, she had begun her letter to Sir Ralph with 'Tell Mr. Cordell.' Why 'tell Mr. Cordell'? Then he had lingered on at Blois after Sir Ralph's departure, had been assiduous in his visits to Jack and the little gentlewomen; he had left his affairs in Luce's hands, and found it necessary to write to her as many letters on business as Sir Ralph did. Old Monsieur Duval shook his head, and hoped in his flowery style that Monsieur Cordell would preserve so much judgment amongst the flames of love as not to be entirely scorched up by them. Sir Ralph disbelieved the report; he assured Monsieur Duval that Luce's long letters were on business only; that Mr. Cordell read him out parts of the letters; and that what he did not read out was doubtless of the same complexion and purport—a great deal to take for granted. Luce would not have been pleased with Sir Ralph could she have heard his vehement assertions that she possessed no possible attractions, and that the gentleman had 'utterly shaken off all thoughts of the Damoiselle, so much apprehended by M. Duval. At last a rumour reaches her, and she writes to Sir Ralph indignantly: 'I am not maryed to Mr. Cordell, nether have I any intention to mary him nor any other, more then to my Deare littall gentillwemen;

and I hope you will please to beleeve mee; nether can I devine how this coms about unlesse it be, because wee entertaine a civill corispondance one with the other, and if that be dangerus I cannot tell then how to behave my selfe in this world.' And so ended the poor waiting-gentlewoman's shadowy little romance.

Mr. Gee and Mr. Cordell agreed better with Sir Ralph than they sometimes did with each other; and during the early part of their stay at Rome he wrote: 'They are now on very faire termes, but they reade no more mathematicall lectures togeather . . . if it please God to bless our company with life and health wee are like to returne togeather, for though Italy is more pleasant to bee seene then France, yet (to say truth) France is much better to dwell in then Italy.' But when it came to the point Sir Ralph and Mun started alone in a coach for Venice, as the others could not tear themselves away from Rome. 'I hope you have Bussed the Lady of Loretto, and have taken a Doctorshipp at least at Padua,' writes Dr. Denton. We hear that the coachman returned much satisfied with his fee.

The morning Sir Ralph left Rome, Mr. Cordell's young servant Germaine 'fell in League with a Violine, and resolved to follow him,' quitting 'his Master most unhandsomely, soe that hee gave him not a penny.' Sir Ralph was sorry for the boy, for 'though his parting was so vile and foolish he stole not the worth of a penny nor tooke soe much as the Razors and Sizars hee Trimmed withall.' They saw him afterwards playing in the streets, but he never wished to be recognised by his English master.

From Venice Sir Ralph sends Mrs. Isham the famous Venetian drug for her family medicine chest. 'I see by your sending of me Venice trekle,' she writes, 'as you thinke I stell deale in Phisicke, but my traviles hath binne so a boute in Inglande, as I have allmost forgote all Phisicke.' 'Hee that is most famous for Treacle,' Sir Ralph notes, 'is called Sig^{r} Antonio Sgobis, and keepes Shopp at the Strazzo or Ostridge, sopra il ponte de' Baretteri, on the right hand going towards St. Mark's. His price is 19 livres (Venize money) a pound, and hee gives leaden potts with the Ostridge signe uppon them, and Papers both in Italian and Lattin to show its virtue.' This celebrated and incredibly nasty compound, traditionally composed by Nero's physician, was made of vipers, white wine, and opium, 'spices from both the Indies,' liquorice, red roses, tops of germander, juice of rough sloes, seeds of treacle mustard, tops of St. John's wort, and some twenty other herbs, to be mixed with honey 'triple the weight of all the dry species' into an electuary. The recipe is given as late as 1739 in Dr. Quincy's 'English Dispensatory,' published by Thomas Longman at the Ship in Paternoster Row. Vipers are essential, and to get the full benefit of them 'a dozen vipers should be put alive into white wine.'

The English doctor, anxious for the credit of British vipers, proves that Venice treacle may be made as well in England, 'though their country is hotter, and so may the more rarify the viperine juices ; . . . yet the Bites of our Vipers at the proper time of year, which is the hottest, are as efficacious and deadly as theirs.' But he complains that the name of Venice goes so far, that English people 'please themselves much with buying a Tin Pot, at a low Price of a dirty sailor . . . with directions in the Italian tongue, printed in London,' and that some base druggists 'make this wretched stuff of little else than the sweepings of their shops.' Sir Ralph could pride himself that his leaden pots contained the genuine horror. It was used as 'an opiate when some stimulus is required at the same time' ; an overdose was confessedly dangerous, and even its advocates allowed that Venice treacle did not suit everyone, because forsooth 'honey disagrees with some particular constitutions.' Sir Ralph is also much taken with some 'old men's house boots,' called Scarfaroni, made of felt bound with leather, 'si tengono in piedi per stare caldo a scrivere' : these cost 8 livres a pair. He keeps the addresses of glovers, and of the glass shops, that he may order goods after his return to England.

From Venice Sir Ralph turned his face homewards, passing through Frankfort and Cologne, Rotterdam and Amsterdam, and reaching Antwerp in September. There he met Dr. George

Morley[1] a life long friend of the Verneys, who had suffered much for the King, and was now ministering to the 'distressed English Loyalists' at Antwerp. His personal habits were such as to recommend him to Sir Ralph. He rose at five and went to bed at eleven, 'not having a fire nor his Bed warmed in the severest season of the year, nor did he eat more than once in the 24 hours.'

If he had a weakness it was his dislike of the Scotch; he wrote of the 'Originall and Eppidemicall sins of that Nation, I meane lying, flattering and boosing'; yet several loyal Scotchmen were amongst his friends.

A brisk correspondence was kept up after Sir Ralph had gone on to Brussels, but Dr. Morley's long theological letters and his groans over the Dutch schismatics, which were so much to Sir Ralph's taste, would severely tax the patience of any modern reader. 'I woonder that Poyson should be so precious,' he wrote to Sir Ralph after going a round of the booksellers; 'I meane that Socinian bookes should be sold at so intolerable a rate.'

Sir Roger Burgoyne wrote of some of the extravagances of religious fanaticism at home: 'On Sunday last was se'night a woman in silke being in Whitehall at the sermon, the subject of the discourse being the Resurrection, shee perfectly stript hir selfe of all hir apparrell, and as shee cam July 28, 1652 into the world from top to toe, shee ran into the middle of the congregation, over against the pulpit, and cryed Wellcome the Resurrection, shee was taken out by the Souldiers and what's become of hir since I know not, some say it was a great peice of selfe denyall, but for that I shall leave you to judge of, this is the naked truth of the business.'

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[1] Afterwards Dean of Christ Church, Bishop of Worcester, and Bishop of Winchester.

Dr. Morley has leisure to do many commissions for Sir Ralph: sometimes he is getting 'a pound and a half of conserve of Marsh Mallows,' at another time some embroidery for a bed. Sir Ralph complains that there are not curtains enough for his large four-poster, and 'that there is noe Vallence, soe that 'tis really but halfe a Bed, and that but a Campania Bed'; the lining, fringes, and embroidering of two extra curtains are to cost 'at least £30 sterling.' Sir Ralph made enquiries in Holland, as to where he could settle Mun to finish his education. Colleges abounded, and many of the provincial towns were flourishing centres of learning. Sir Ralph had a liking for Utrecht, remembering how much his brother Edmund had profited by his studies in its newly founded university when quartered in the town as a soldier; but he thought the place too Popish. Besides the foreign professors, English exiles as tutors were a drug in the market. Younger sons of noble families, with infinite leisure and pressing pecuniary needs, were hungering for pupils; clergymen of the Church of England of the highest academical distinction, destined in after years to fill her bishoprics and deaneries, were now at the lowest ebb of their fortunes, and with no hope of better days. Dr. Morley knew them all, as well as Heinsius, Salmasius, and other learned Dutchmen ; he was the very man, therefore, to recommend a college or a tutor. He introduced Sir Ralph to Dr. Creighton, another embryo bishop staying at Ghent, formerly known to Sir Edmund Verney. Dr. Robert Creighton had been a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. Regius Professor of Greek, Public Orator to the University, Chaplain to Charles I., Canon of Lincoln, &c. All this Greek and philosophy, with a great deal of combative orthodoxy besides, were running to seed till Sir Ralph came to the rescue with the offer of a handsome salary and a big-boned, lazy, good-humoured English boy as a pupil. He thought Dr. Creighton's demands too modest, and gladly named a larger sum, telling him 'that he would deserve that and more too' for his care of his son : 'This hee seemed to take very kindly.' The Doctor asked fourteen days to make his preparations, and so the matter was settled. Learned and excellent as he was, it does not appear that Dr. Creighton was very agreeable, or that Mun approved of the arrangement. He only wished to go back to England ; and, feeling very lonely and rather ill-used, he had no idea with how heavy a heart his father made the entry, the night they parted, in his calendar, 'Munn is gon.'

To Dr. Denton he wrote : 'In all my life I was Sept. $\frac{21}{11}$, 1652 never thus alone, for when my deare Wife went over, I had two Children and a Family which is now reduced to a little (very little) Footboy; I need not tell you how sad this makes mee.'

Sir Ralph has a sharp attack of fever at Antwerp which depresses him extremely. His cousin, Robert Spencer, urges him to come on to Brussels, as the air is much purer. Sir Ralph stays several weeks at Brussels 'au Lieuve d'Or sur la Sablone,' and Cousin Gee joins him there. They are made much of by the English colony. The Spencers and Sir Ralph support an English Church service. Mr. Spencer refers to his rooms as 'your Pallace neare my Cottage'; he is choosing black and white Flanders lace, ordered by lady friends at home: 'My Lady Lisle desires an Ebony Cabanet, and for Dores or none, she leaves it to me. . . . I cannot meete with an Ebony Cabanet that's good, I can have choice of Tortus Shell, garnished out with very thin silver or guilt Brasse which I like much better; . . . the best choyce is at Antwerp.'

Sir Ralph is anxious to revise his will, and cannot do it away from all his papers. Since the last was made in 1643, he has lost both wife and daughter, and its provisions are now obsolete. 'I would doe some other things about my estate before I take any more long journeys, for I am old,' he writes wearily, 'and the times sickly.' He had just completed his fortieth year.

There is an outburst of joy amongst his friends at home at the first mention of his return. He has his own doubts about the prudence of it, and is considering whether he should conceal his name or 'lie publickly' in lodgings. He has many offers of hospitality. Mr. Wakefield has 'a little Island at Edmonton where you may bee as private as you will desire and very wellcome.' Monsieur Duval is ready to share with him the modest rooms he is preparing for his wife near St. Martin's Church. Trusty Roger is beside himself with delight. 'I am now come to Lodgings in the Strand over against Yorke House, where if I may have the happinesse to see my dearest friend it will make my old legges to Caper, and with excess of joy be ready to transport, my deare heart, Thy most affectionat and humble sarvant.' He cannot, however, recommend the Strand. 'It is so moist a Place' that he thinks of removing into the City. Sir Ralph prefers to be in his old neighbourhood of Covent Garden; he dislikes a boarding-house, but will not object to going to a cookshop for his meals. 'Oxford Kate[1] dresses meate well, but I heare Oxford John as well and cheaper.' Dr. Denton, as his wife complains, neglects all his own business to run after his nephew's. Sir Ralph writes from Brussels: 'By the next I doubt not but to tell you the very day I intend to set forwards towards London. . . . I purpose to bring noe Boy

Dec. $\frac{28}{18}$, 1652

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[1] Pepys speaks of the trial of Sir Charles Sedley 'for his debauchery at Oxford Kate's' (*Diary*, July 1, 1663).

with me, but I must have at least one that knowes some service, and can doe a Message ; . . . if you can meet with none little, take one of 16 or 17 yeares old ; if I like him not 'tis but losing his livery and leaving him behinde mee ; all servants are good at first, and therefore I doubt not but to bee well served for soe small a time. I purpose to come in a Coach from Dover, with our company, but you shall not know when it comes out of London, least you trouble yourself, and hinder your affaires for a complement. . . . Order matters soe as we may chatt a whole day, before any other know I am in towne.' He returns several times to the important matter of the foot-boy : 'One that knows service and can doe a Message hansomly is of more use to me at present then anything, which I doubt noe Raw Country Boy can doe. . . . If Sir Tho. Hewyt, Nattycock, or Aunt Sherard had such a Boy, I would take the liberty to borrow him for a moneth, which is the most I intend to stay in England, at this Bout; and then return him to them againe in his old Livery and take away mine. This is ordinarily done, both here and in France, therefore I presume it will not bee woondered at in England, but that you know best and must tell me.' He has some thoughts of bringing over the boy who waits upon him at Brussels, 'though hee know noe more English then I doe Hebrew ; . . . hee is honest and drinkes only water.' He writes again : 'I love not to take a servant with a friend, for all servants tattle. . . . If my Lady Lisle's boy bee fit, and shee will part with him without thinking she doth me a favour, I shall take him, though, 'tis hazardous taking any from persons in authority, for when they are corrected, they may tell tales and accuse or betray a Master. . . . Court noe body to come to me, but if you take any, let them learne to order Wiggs.'

Sir Ralph has been so long out of London that he is anxious not to be 'singular.' Mrs. Isham, who of old took a lively interest in 'the chases in Hide Park,' thus instructs him in the fashions: 'There are Pages in trunks [trunk hose] that ride behind the coches, but not many, I know none of your acquaintance that has one but Sir Arthur Haslerigg, and yet I never saw him behind a coch. He is in cloath trunks billited or garded with velvet,[1] silver sword, and silver buckles on his shoes, and silk stockings.'

Dr. Denton has heard of a house 'on the right hand going towards Russell St., with a faire dining Roome, little lodging chamber, and a good closet of a Floore, and the same againe over head, and a garret or two with chimnies above. The price was 15*s.* a Weeke, but being now better furnished 20*s.* is the price; the people are very good and dresse meate well and simply; use only the lower Roomes for themselves, and have no children only one Neece. . . . Mrs. Dubbles' house is neare it and better furnished, but she dresses noe meate.' Sir Ralph desires him to 'take such as are best furnished, staires lightest, the Roomes fairest and fewest children, and see the chimnies smoke not.' London lodgings have since grown dearer and dingier, for Dr. Denton succeeded in finding a fair chamber, 'which hath a partition in it, where your man may ly, on the first floore, with a very large french grey cloath bed, lined with scarlett sarsenett; the next chamber over against it, and a light study, for 15*s.* p. weeke.'

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[1] Hotspur speaks of 'velvet guards and Sunday citizens,' *Henry IV.* I. act iii. scene 1.

Dr. Morley has been writing to Mr. Secretary Nicholas about getting him a pass, and a magnificent document arrives, sealed with the Dutch lion rampant, and the bundle of seven arrows in his paw, addressed by the States-General of the United Netherlands to all generals, colonels, admirals, vice-admirals, captains, lieutenants, scouts, and common soldiers, on horse or on foot, by sea or by land, to allow Sir Ralph Verney to go on his way in peace. **Jan. $\frac{23}{13}$, 1653** Sir Ralph writes: 'On Thursday next I begin my journey, and hope to be at Dunkerke the Mounday after, and the Paquet Boate being then there I hope to get a Boat Expresse at a cheaper rate.' Mrs. Spencer, her son Edward, and a daughter are to go to England under the escort of Sir Ralph and Cousin Gee.

Mr. Spencer reminds Sir Ralph, 'seeing the keeping of lawes groweth againe in request,' that he must continue to send his 10*l.* a year for the support of the **Jan. $\frac{7}{17}$, 1653** English minister: 'Heere are playes and the Traineaux runne round, I see none of them but sit in the chimney-corner and get a nap to keep me from being giddy, now the world runnes round ; but I shall ever remaine fixed, Sir, Your most affectionate Cosen and humble servant, R. S.' He bitterly laments Sir Ralph's absence. 'To what end did you cause me to make my walke broader for to walke alone ?'

Mr. Spencer's sketches of Brussels society are very bright, though he was himself confined to the house : 'Sepulchrum meum domus mea est.' 'This is no contemptible place where there are playes every day, shooting at Papegeau, fighting with the 2 handed swords, great Tours à la mode, the Prince of Condé royally feasted by many of the nobility ; Balles, where the Ladyes appeare in all their beauty, both naturall and artificiall, where the Prince of Condé, a curious dancer, danceth with the fairest one after another. But I saw none of these things. . . . I was reading a treatise about the Pope's infallibility, and am now sufficiently satisfyed that there is no such thing as an infallible chaire, not your Speaker's in England, nor the Pope's heere.'

There are most interesting complications in the travelling party. 'The truth is,' writes Sir Ralph, 'Mrs. Spencer's eldest daughter and my companion in my Travells are like to couple,' but 'Mum for this.' In such agreeable society Mr. Gee was drawn out of his love of 'Carthusian silence.' Mr. Spencer thanks him for his great care of Mrs. Spencer during the voyage, and a little later a friend who had known

March $\frac{20}{10}$, 1653

him only in his unsociable moods hears with surprise that 'Mr. Gee has fallen the way of all flesh, and is married again.' Sir Ralph writes to the bride's father from London after a Sunday wedding: 'I cannot but expresse some part of my joy to you, as well as them, for the happy conclusion of that greate worke.'

June 16, 1653

When they return to Brussels, in June, Sir Ralph goes with them to Rochester; Edward Spencer writes: 'The pleasantnesse of the waies and the weather, and the good humour of our coachman and his horses, brought us last night safe to Dover; . . . my mother would have forced you not only hither, but to have tasted a sillibub, in a new sillibub pot at Bruxelles.' Cousin Gee writes from Dunkirk, 'Yesterday about 10 of the clocke we arrived at Mardike, from whence wee were conveied in the Governor's Coach to this place, and as soone as we had a little filled the vacuum the sea had made, went to bedd, where we supped and slept till just now [4 in the morning], I rise to write this letter.' They had been fired upon by an English ship, and had pursued 'a Hamburger,' and arrived at last much worn out. 'The greate joy wee found here, for the declaring the King of Hungary King of the Romans, and the expense of powder thereby occationed had beene worth our notice, had we not had more considerable businesse in providing for our owne repose. Wee are all, both men and women, much your servants.'

Mr. Robert Spencer welcomes home 'my dearest,' my son and daughter and 'my sonne Gee.' He tells

Sir Ralph that he will never 'be able to answer before a jury of Ladies; for if Burbon were blamed for throwing away his shield, what will become of you for forsaking your charge, your Pallace here, and Spa journey, &c.?' The Gees seem to have settled in 'the Pallace,' and Mr. Spencer handed over to his son-in-law the care of providing an English service at Brussels. Mr. Gee found it no easy task, and thus pours out his troubles to Sir Ralph: 'Wee have now gott a Confessor, to morrow hee beginning to preach and wee to censure, wee shall not bee above 2 or 3 gathered together and I beleeve wee shall be in as many factions. Some or one I heare thinks preaching once a fortnight enough for those who have thus long rubbed out without it, another that since wee have soe long wanted wee can never have enough, and soe wee must have the precious word held out to us twice a Sunday and every time a new prayer both before and after sermon; this is there language soe you may beleeve some body shortly will have cause to regreat his readinesse to serve.' The minister has been installed, and he writes again: 'Wee once a weeke pray and Preach, as yett without Disturbance, but i beleeve our Reigne will not be long, for by your absence wee are to seeke how to proportion our Minister's allowance since my L^{d}: G: [Gorges] will not be drawne beyond his first offer and there are noe other contributors but our ffamily. The Preacher is for ought I heare of Life unblameable, and seriously preaches exceeding well, but he must thinke of returning if any more of his congregation forsake this place.'

Mrs. Gee is devoted to her parents, and unable to leave them, owing to 'The good gentleman's indisposition, and the good lady's resolve to take the Spa waters in her velvet bed, rather then leave him without any other company then a troublesome gout and melancholy considerations of the inconveniency of her absence.' Sir Ralph makes particular inquiries after the bride's health, and her husband writes: 'My wife is much your servant, but when I told her of your question, she looked nine waies at once, and gave you noe answer.' He then writes affectionately about her and their happy hopes. 'God blesse the Babby that is coming,' replied Sir Ralph.

Mr. Spencer concludes his letter with a little joke, common to all Sir Ralph's friends during the next forty years: 'I guesse you are looking out for a Cornelia to governe your house, and keepe you warme next winter, so that you will need none of my woodpile, jambon, nor tongue.' Old Aunt Ursula, Sir Francis Verney's widow, is busy in the same direction. 'She is much your humble servant, and is providing you with a wife; a virgine about 30 yeares old, £1000 p. ann: in possession, £1000 p. ann: more in reversion, all in England; and £1000 per ann: more in Ireland. But she is a papist. . . . I hope you will not be such a clowne, as not to take notice of it in a letter to her.' But, adds Dr. Denton drily, this will be 'a motive as stronge as a Loadstone to bringe you home.'

'Teach me to answer to my Catechize,' writes Cousin Gee. 'Quest: Is not your freind Sir Ralph Verney married?

'Answ: Wherere I goe I am posed and must bee soe till you informe me, nor till then will I wish you joy.'

The object of so much solicitude replies: 'As yet I can answere your Worshipp's Question and saifly say: Your servant R. V. is not married, nor for ought hee knowes, (notwithstanding your good example) one jott nearer it, then when you left him. Neverthelesse hee cannot justly complaine of any Woeman's unkindnesse, since none did ever yet deny him.' For the best of all reasons, as Mrs. Gee reminded him, for he had never asked another woman to fill Mary's place in his heart and home.

CHAPTER III.

CONCERNING CHILDREN AND THEIR BREEDING.

1650–1654.

> 'Is the framing of young minds so mean a point of cunning?'
> MULCASTER, 1581.

BEFORE Sir Ralph gets back to Claydon and plunges into his home business a word must be said of the children of the family, about whom he was now specially concerned: his own two boys, Mun and Jack, their cousins Peg and Moll Eure, and his god-daughter Nancy Denton, 'Doctor's girl,' whom both these judicious men combined to pet and spoil.

Sir Ralph was devoted to girls: his love for his own little daughter had been so great he had often thought right to 'dissemble' lest his boys should regard her as his favourite; he ceased not to mourn her loss, but he extended this fatherly love to his numerous nieces, 'she-cousins,' and god-daughters. He was never too busy to answer the childish letters they wrote him in large text hand; and when the children grew up into maidens, he was still the kind adviser and wise confidant to whom they poured out the more complicated troubles of youth, and appealed if the older members of the family were to be coaxed into granting a favour, or they themselves were to be forgiven some girlish indiscretion. Sir Ralph was their humble servant, whether he was wanted to choose them some 'modish' lace and ribbons, or to prevent an invitation being sent by their parents to an unwelcome suitor. Nancy, his god-daughter and special favourite, still continued to address him as 'Deare Parent' when she was herself a matron with a son at Oxford and a marriageable daughter. His relations with Margaret and Mary Eure were equally affectionate: they asked his advice in their difficulties, as their mother had done before them, and indeed still did, though she was now under the protection of a third husband, Captain the Honourable Philip Sherard.

While girls of all ages excited Sir Ralph's reverent admiration, and could always command his services, boys were a trouble and a weariness to him: he had never been a boy himself, and did not understand the species. He was far too good a man not to perform conscientiously all the graver duties of a father, and the intimate correspondence between him and his sons when they came to man's estate shows the solid friendship that existed between them. But he was over-anxious and severe; he would come down upon some childish fault with a sledge-hammer blow which Mary's tact would have warded off; and because of his desire that his eldest son should maintain the traditions of the family, and be a worthy owner of Claydon, he judged him more severely than his younger brother. Edmund and John Verney belonged to the unhappy generation of young Englishmen who were cut off from that public school and college life which has provided England (as Canning believed) with an uninterrupted succession of men qualified for the performance of parliamentary and other public work. The discipline of Eton and Winchester, the noisy fun of the playing-fields, the rivalries and friendships of Oxford and Cambridge, were all unknown to boys whose parents were dragging out weary years of exile in the provincial towns of France and the Low Countries, or dancing attendance on the Stuarts in Paris and at the Hague. Sir Ralph spared no expense for tutors. 'Mun's breeding costs me more than you imagen,' he wrote to Dr. Denton, 'and I would rather save it in anything then that. But at least one French master, Durand, turned out badly, and had to be dismissed 'for his Drinking and Lyeing,' and Sir Ralph discovered later, to his infinite vexation, that some of those who had been about the boys had neglected their proper work, and tried to infuse into their minds the poison of 'Popish doctrine.'

Edmund was not quite seven years old when he was taken from home. During the eighteen months that Mary was attending to her husband's business in England, he sadly missed his mother's tender care, and at thirteen he lost her altogether. Instead of spending his holidays in scampering on his pony about the park at Claydon, in watching the decoys with the keeper, or hawking in 'the Great Sea Wood,' he had been brought up amidst the petty decorums and restraints of a small French town. There was some out-of-door life in the autumn, when the whole population of Blois turned out for the grape-gathering, and there was fun, not of the best kind, at the time of the annual fair, when the boys generally managed to get into mischief and domestic disgrace.

Sir Ralph himself as a young man had never cared for field sports: he could ride for miles and miles when business demanded it, but he never thought of exercise for either health or pleasure. Cricket and football were yet unknown at our public schools; but even their antique predecessors, marbles, hoops, and hopscotch, must have been more amusing than the fencing and dancing which Mun and Jack were so punctiliously taught. When Mun is said to be 'sluggish' in his ways as a youth, and apt to lounge over the fire in slovenly attire, these drawbacks of his boyhood must not be forgotten. There was but little laughter in the home at Blois after Mary left them, unless while Sir Henry Puckering Newton was on a visit. When Sir Ralph was buried in his letters, and Luce Sheppard was watching over the proprieties, it could scarcely have been seemly in the little house for Mun and Jack to indulge in such noisy games as boys love and require.

Sir Ralph during his wife's absence had corresponded with her about his educational anxieties.

'Mun, poore childe, is a woefull schollar, though neither himselfe nor Master will beleeve it.' 'Mun,' he writes again, 'fearing his last letter would not please you, the carracter beeing small, hath now writt againe, and expects an answere, therefore you had best write him word you like this, but dislike the other; charge him to bee a good Boy and learne hard, and let him bid his sister doe soe too; and then make large promises what you will bring them out of England. . . . Now if you like it . . . I would . . . have André come every day to teach Munn the gittarr and to sing to it, for the Lute is soe tedious a thing that I doubt (unlesse hee made it his whole businesse) hee would never play well; but this hee may doe, and not neglect his lattin, and also learne to singe with it.'

When Sir Ralph was to sup with some French neighbours he writes: 'They invited both the children very sollemly, but I had the witt to leave them behinde'; and of Jack he says: 'I would have him keepe good houres, rather let him fast at night than eate soe late.' A friend describes to Ralph how 'Your sonn Mr. Munn,' aged eleven, 'did us the favour last Fryday to repeate some verses out of Virgil to us, which he did so well, that hee therby acquired honnour both to himselfe and Master. Our gentlemen here sayeing they never saw the like, and I am confident they did not dissemble.' The tutor reports: 'Il faict merveille. . . . Je luy raconte une histoire en Français, il me la rend (extempore) en Latin.'

The singing, and the playing on the guitar, do not seem to have prospered so well, and Sir Ralph writes rather severely to Mun from Paris : 'I have taken order with the Gittarr Master to send me a fine Gittare for you when I send for it, but first I will see whether you deserve it ; . . . for if you have not studdied it hard in my absence, a worse shall serve your turne, and therefore I would not buy one till I have heard you sing and play.'

Sir Ralph became a perfect oracle about the cost of education and board in France, even to the price of extras, 'their extraordinaries,' as he calls them, that inexperienced boarders ordered between their meals, 'and the fees to the Hostess' that must be presented on leaving. 200*l.* a year was considered a proper allowance for an English youth who was to be boarded in a good French family : 'they will keepe him a footboy, and procure him an able man that shall bee his Tutor both in Greeke and Lattin ; and also pay for all his other exercises, as Mathematike, Dancing, Fencing, Riding, Musick, and Language Master, and finde him good cloathes of all sorts, gloves, ribbons, etc., and pocket money also in a reasonable way. . . . Bookes, paper, Instruments, both for Musick, and the Mathematicks, and further in case he should bee sick, they will provide Doctor, Apothecary, and a keeper.'

It had been settled before Mary's death that his Aunt, Mrs. Sherard,[1] should send her two little girls, Margaret and Mary Eure, to France under the care of

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[1] See vol. i. chap. xii.—'The Rich Wido.'

Luce Sheppard.' As almost the only survivors of a family that had suffered severely in the Civil War, their mother was anxious that the children should have more advantages of gentle breeding than the distracted state of England then afforded. But she had another reason for sending them abroad. Little Mary was a sensitive and delicate child, suspected of having the king's evil. The lawful sovereign of England was a wanderer and an exile, and, even if he could be approached, they doubted whether his touch would have its full virtue, as he was not a duly anointed king. In these delicate circumstances so ardent a Royalist as Mrs. Sherard resolved to send over Mary to be 'touched' by the young Louis XIV. 'Sweet Nephew,' she wrote, 'I have after A long debate with my selfe sent my tow gurles where I shall desier youre care of them that thay may be tought what is fite for them as y^e reding of y^e french tong and to singe and to dance and to right [spelling was not a necessary accomplishment] and to playe of y^e gittar, if it may not be dangorous for them to cast them areye [awry], for yt my eldist gurle is apt tow, if lewcey have not A great care of her. But before thay can setell to any thing I have desired lewcey to make meanes yt my youngist gurle may be towchid for y^e evell which I dow consieve shee hath, but yt y^e D^r will give a beter jugement of when he seese her then I can. I have keept A strickt hand over them, soe I desier as lewcey may, and not to leave them at any time allone with any of ther masters that teacheth them ther exersisis, for tow much familiaritey will give them tow great A boldness. If you pleas to have A care of this my tow jewelles you will for ever oblige me.'

Sir Ralph writes most kindly to Luce about the arrangements for Mrs. Sherard's 'tow jewelles': 'I most justly owe (and shall ever pay) their mother a perpetual respect for many favours, but espetially for her constant kindnesse and affection to my deare deare wife, being bound to honour all that loved her.' Dr. Denton's little girl was coming with them, and Sir Ralph asks him to tell him 'at large, what she may spend, what she should learne, and how she should bee disposed and ordered.' The child is to work chiefly at Latin, which is to make her of service to her father 'and a reproach to all that know her,' by which it would appear that English ladies had dropped the study of Latin since the days of Lady Jane Grey. Little Nancy Denton is sick when her cousins start from Rye, so she is left behind, to be under her father's care, and goes for change of air to Claydon Rectory; but Sir Ralph greatly regrets it, for he had found her a home in a family of good position, with '2 very pretty well bred children, that would have taught Nancie more French in a moneth than 20 Masters would have donn in a yeare.'

Luce writes to Sir Ralph of their voyage: 'Sir, I pray tell M^{r} Cordell that wee cam over in a sheepe, and not in a schallope. I durst not venture the gentillwemen in a schallope, because I had never passed in any my selfe, the schallopes are thay say, the freest from robers and doe pase much this summer time, but the schallopes are open to all wheather, and I am suer most in danger of being cast away ; the seas are very full of pirats, yet thankes be to God our passage was free from all danger. . . . S^r wee are lodged neere the rue de fournon if you please to direct your letters chez madam marye, dans le rue de petit lion, au plat degele au fourburge St. Jarmine, A paris : this streete goeth into the rue detoursnon.'

A set of books sent to Sir Ralph had been seized by the Custom House officers.[1] Luce Sheppard was bringing him out more books, physic, and miscellaneous goods from his worthy uncle.

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[1] This is Dr. Denton's list:—

'1. A Booke of Acts of Parliament.
2. A Pack of old Puritanas.
3. A Vindication of the oath of Alegeanse.
4. A Breife appollogie for non subscribers.
5. Considerations of the present Engagement.
6. Just re-proposalls to Humble proposalls.
7. A disengaged surveigh of the Engagement.
8. A case of Conscience concerning Ministers &c.
9. Humble proposalls of Learned Devines.
10. A discourse concerning the Engagement.
11. The Engagement vindicated and explained.
12. A Logicall Demonstration.
13. Rome Ruined by Whitehall.
14. Parliament of Ladies. [A witty and scurrilous Royalist pamphlet of considerable notoriety.]
15. An Act of Parliament concerning Bannishinge Cavileires of London &c.

'These came to Dieppe about a fortnight before Easter, and were seized there and sent to Rouen, and the customes of Rouen say they sent them to the Douane at Paris.'

'Deare Raph, I have sent per Luce, Hobs de corpore politico, Judges Judged, Young clearks guide, The exercitation answered, 2 faire warnings and their answer, An Anatomie of Independencie, Extract of Malt, Sal Chalyb :, 6 case knives, 1 blew knife for Mun, 4 paire of Gray stocking, 4 paire of thred stocking, 2 bookes of D^{r} Taylors in Quires, one is a new one, 2 bookes of Bishopp Andrewes in Quires, 1 Sclater on the 4th of Romans bound, and 1 Shelton in blew pap^{r} to teach y^{e} boyes to write short hand,' an accomplishment much practised to this day by the Verneys of Claydon. June 12, 1650

Luce wishes to leave Paris because of the 'chargeableness of the place,' and perhaps to go to St. Germains. 'The children are very well, and love french potage, espesially Miss Margreat.' Sir Ralph makes use of Luce to look after a horse to be sold, and to see to the renewing of 'an old periwig, I long since sent towards Paris by an English gentleman, but hee sinc uppon the way, sent it me back again.' Sir Ralph's coachman is to wait and bring it back, 'but Munday being Hallowday it hendered the man from working and by that resonne the periwige is not dri enought to cary.' 'Sir,' continues Luce, 'the periwige man standeth out in it, that his bargaine was made to give but 4 periwiges and 2 borders by the yeare, and that hee will give you noe more then 4 by the yeare, upon that contract, but nevertheless he will make you a very hansum one and send it you forthwith and a reseat for the money, and his mind in a leter.'

Mrs. Sherard is anxious that her girls should be with Sir Ralph, but she hopes 'as Lewcy will wach the phirst oppertewnity for to have Mary touched.' Luce hears that the young French king is not yet 'consecrated as they call it,' so she is doubtful whether his touch will be effectual after all; and 'the French say that there is noe other cerimoney then for the scicke to passe by the king, and he toucheth the wound and saith, I touch and God healeth.'

Sir Ralph replies: 'Luce, I received yours dated 16 July, but canot tell how to advis you to dispose of yourselfe. St. Germain's is a pleasant place and you may remove thether for a little, but I know not what Masters are there, and I doubt soe many English as are there, will much hinder the children in learning French. . . . Where ever you settle choose good aire, and not too neare any Water, because one of the children it seemes hath some swelling which a moist place may possibly increase.'

The children are to be kept hard at their lessons as much as they be 'capabull' of, but there are no masters at St. Germains, 'for when the inglish court is thare thay have masters from paris att a very highe rate, but my Lady Browne telleth mee of a place about a mile and hafe from paris, which is a very good aire and standeth close by the water side; it is called Shaleau whare masters from paris will willingly goe.

Money having 'grone very loe,' Luce started off for Blois. Unknown to her 'they lay in a house at Paris where the Measells was.' Mary first and then Margaret sickened at Orleans, causing a delay 'which was neither for their pleasure nor their profit.'

They reach Blois at last, and Sir Ralph looks forward to Luce's help in his housekeeping as having been trained by Mary. 'Luce is careful of the children and thrifty'; his own maidservant, Nan Castle, 'can doe all well, but hold her tongue, Luce shall now governe her, she is cleanly and makes better pottage then puddings.' Poor little Mary, not having been sufficiently pulled down by the measles, is immediately ordered to have 'an Ishue,' and 'the small pocks came out upon Peg Eure.' At the same time Sir Ralph writes: 'After dinner my deare Jack fell sick of fever, but by the blessing of my good God, hee is reasonable well recovered, and hee is not violent.' Dr. Denton replies: 'I am sorry to find you are all soe sickly. I hope and pray for the best. It is more trouble to me to heare your finger akes there, then that your head should ake here. . . . I am glad to heare Pegge is soe well of the small pocks, her mother hath another younge Captaine, and I have sent her word of your care and kindnes to her Babes.'

September 18, 1650

October 1650

Any anxiety about his children makes Sir Ralph miss their mother afresh. 'The Wise man tells us that a Vertuous Woman is a Crowne to her Husband,' and that St. Paul styles 'the Woman the

Glory of the Man, but now alas my Crowne is fallen from my Head, and my Glory buried in obscurity.' His thoughts constantly return, like doves to their cote, and wheel round the one face and voice shrined in his inmost heart.

It is painful to have to record that Sir Ralph was very unsound on the subject of girls' education. Of his own dear little daughter he once wrote: 'Pegg is very backward . . . I doubt not but she will be schollar enough for a Woeman.' In forbidding to girls all serious intellectual studies, he differed hopelessly from Dr. Denton, who was modern enough in his ideas to have sat on the Council of the Girls' Public Day Schools Company. In a letter about Nancy, Sir Ralph breaks out into a ferocious protest against feminine 'Learning': 'Let not your girle learne Latin, nor Short hand; the difficulty of the first may keepe her from that Vice, for soe I must esteeme it in a woeman; but the easinesse of the other may bee a prejudice to her; for the pride of taking Sermon noates, hath made multitudes of woemen most unfortunate.' 'D^r^ D^r^ teach her to live under obedience, and whilst she is unmarried, if she would learne anything, let her aske you, and afterwards her huband, *At Home.* Had St. Paul lived in our Times I am most confident hee would have fixt a *Shame* upon our woemen for writing (as well as for theire speaking) in the Church.'

Miss Nancy had her own views which she scrawled in a large text-hand. 'Dearea god father, I now sho my boldnes unto you supposseng that youer goodnes is so gret that I dar to presum of it, but not without besegn youer parden, and I wold intrete you ser, to present my sarves unto my coussens and i know you and my coussenes wil out rech me in french, but i am a goeng whaar i hop i shal out rech you in ebri grek and laten, praeng you ser if i may be so bould as to desier on leter from you, then shuld i thing myshelf veri much bound unto you, ser, resteng youer veri loveng dater, ANNE DENTON.' Her father adds a postscript: 'I need not tell you this is ex puris naturalibus, and I hope it will give you as good content as if Nat. Hobart or Selden had writt it for her.' Old Selden was still alive, and he and Sir Ralph had many friends in common, notably Archbishop Usher and Sir Edward Herbert.

Sir Ralph replies with much tenderness, but he stands to his guns.

To D$^{r's}$ Girle.

'MY DEAR CHILDE,—nothing but yourselfe, could have beene soe welcome as your letter, nor have surprized mee more, for I must confesse I did not think you had beene guilty of soe much learning as I see you are; and yet it seems you rest unsatisfied or else you would not threaten Lattin, Greeke, and Hebrew too. Good sweet hart bee not soe covitous; beleeve me a Bible (with y^e Common prayer) and a good plaine cattichisme in your Mother Tongue being July 27, 1652 well read and practised, is well worth all the rest and much more sutable to your sex ; I know your Father thinks this false doctrine, but bee confident your husband will bee of my oppinion. In French you cannot bee too cunning[1] for that language affords many admirable bookes fit for you as Romances, Plays, Poetry, Stories of illustrious (not learned) Woemen, receipts for preserving, makinge creames and all sorts of cookeryes, ordring your gardens and in Breif all manner of good housewifery. If you please to have a little patience with yourselfe (without Hebrew, Greeke, or Lattin) when I goe to Paris againe I will send you halfe a dozen of the french bookes to begin your Library. In the meane time I know you will endeavour to understand them, and do me soe much right, as to beeleeve that above all others, I am sweet heart, your most affectionate and humble servant.'

During Sir Ralph's absence Luce Sheppard sent him constant reports of the three children left in her charge. 'M^r^ John is very well and about 2 dayes scince the mesuex [Messieurs] barbies and M^r^ Cotton [afterwards Sir Robert Cotton of Combermere, and one of 'Mistress Margaret's' many suitors] had him to the comedy where thay ware very late, but the gentillmen very civily rendering M^r^ John att his lodging, the doore being allready shut, the gentillmen would have had M^r^ John gone and layen with them ; but hee so discreetly answared them with thankes,

May 1651

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[1] **'Cunning in knowledge,' Dan. i. 4.**

that hee would not lye out of his lodging for 5 pistoles. . . . Mistress Margaret beseecheth you to except of her humble service with Mr. Verney Mistress Mary doth the same.' 'I am now amakeing M^r John som new clothes and thinke to make use of the shortest scarlet cloke. . . . Madam Juselier would have put us out of her house, in hopes to have had 2 pistoles a month for her chamber of a french man, but when shee saw her plote was spoiled, and May 14, 1651 that I had taken other lodgings, shee then imployed all her frinds to keepe us heare.' 'I beleeve M^r John groweth very studious, for madam Testard telleth mee shee findeth him att his study in the morning in his bed, with 2 bookes together of laten and ffrench; hee looketh tall in his brichches.' The little crooked legs, his only fault, as his mother used to say fondly, May 28, 1651 are still a trouble; but Luce continues: 'D^r Testard would not let mee have any thing made to ware upon his leags, for hee saith that will but ware them more, and truly sir thay are not much seene now his stocking is wrinkeled downe over them.' In July Luce continues her report: 'I doe not find hee holdeth out his belly so much as hee did; Madame Testard confarmes mee in my beleevef: truly I thinke shee is a good woman and is carefull of M^r John. S^r I thinke it will bee to noe purpose to make M^r John a stufe clocke, for the summer is farre spent and so is his stufe sute; and hee telleth mee that he doth not find his cloke which hee hath trublesume notwithstanding the heate.' Dr. Denton remarks on the report sent him of the child's health. 'Mons^{r} Jean his swelled leggs and great belly looks so like a dropsy. It is not usuall in children . . . at the best it argues a very weake liver. Steele is the thinge must doe him good.'

Luce is devoted to her 'littell gentillwemen,' and anxious they should have their social rights. She complains that the lord Allington and his governor 'use littell sivility whare thare was so much oblygation,' but a few days later she reports that 'lord Allington hath bestowed a visit upon my littell gentillwemen with his governor and sum other english gentillmen, for thare is not any english in towne but have done them that respect. . . . Lord Allington groweth very kind; he invited M^{r} John to dine with him very earnestly, meeting him coming from Church'—which honour, with the shyness of an English schoolboy, Mr. John emphatically declined—'he went not, nor will not goe!' In August: 'M^{r} John hath binne ill of the toothake and feverish, and was once let blud, but now thankes be to God hee is well againe and goeth to schoole and begineth to make theames; his master liketh them very well for his first. Madam Testard hath bought M^{r} John a dixsonary by his master's direction.'

The accounts of Mistress Mary are delightful: she is never strong, and, in spite of much severe medical treatment, 'continueth as shee did, but is allwayes merry and in good humour according to custome.' In the Testard house the daughter has died of fever, 'and the litell boy which was so joyly, sickened when his mother did and died in four days after her, so for the present thare is a very sad Famely.' Jack himself writes a letter full of heroic resolutions, which may be held to contain the Whole Duty of Boy at ten years old. He will study his books and take pains with his guitar; he will never, and never did, spend his money in 'frute and gunpowder'; he will never play with naughty street boys, nor stand about at the fair when the sun is hot; he will not eat cherries nor do anything else that Madam Testard and Mademoiselle Luce disapprove; nor ever disoblige the best of fathers. Luce adds: 'As neere as wee can, wee will keep him from eateing any raw Frute, and for milke I beleeve hee eateth not any. . . . When hee is strong it will be very necessary to have him dance, for thare is nothing adresseth the body so much as that.'

'M^r John is better and begineth his excercisces againe to writ and to designe,' but he is still kept to the house, and Luce has 'to give him sum money to divert him and to take his mind off from going to D^r Testard's "vandang blanch"; . . . thare is a monstrous deall of wine this yeare, so they that com to Bloys may drinke au bonn marchee, thare is thought will be left grapes unvandanged'—Luce's British French accent is audible across the two centuries and a half—'to fill at the least 6 or 8 thousand poynsons.'[1] Oct. 6, 1652

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[1] Modern French *pointon*, English *puncheon*, originally a mark punched into a cask, then used for the cask itself.

In July 1653 Mr. John has had the smallpox, but Madame Testard 'beleeves he will not be marked; noe master goeth to him yet, for his eyes must needes be weake.' Jack has his mother's merry spirits; 'he riseth in the morning by 6 a clake of his owne accord, and sings and danceth without cease.'

Dec. 24, 1652

Of the girls Luce writes: 'As for Miss Margaret she is, Thankes be to God, a very helthy and wholesum child, and in my opinion will make a hansum woman; . . . she is much in esteeme with the french ladyes. But Miss Margaret doth not larne any exercise so soone as her sister doth; and yet shee taketh as much or more paines. Miss Mary hath a very quicke witte, and very endustriues, and capable to larne any thing, and if it please God shee be perfectly cured, it will bee the greatest hapines that ever I had in this world. . . . M^r John nor Miss Margreat never have any chilblains nether doe they ware furr gloves, but Miss Mary wareth furr gloves, not that shee hath had any chilblans this yeare one her hands att all, but shee hath chilblans one her feet, but noe great matters. . . . Sir Rich: Browne told mee when hee passt by, that our king had of late healed a ppasent [peasant] which was most desperusly roten with the evell.'

Sir Ralph thinks of leaving Mun abroad with a tutor. 'I finde that Mons^r Du Val would gladly embrace that imployment, and (if his age bee noe impediment) a youth may bee happy with him. For though hee is noe neate, quaint[1] man, yet hee very well knowes what belongs to youth, both in point of Learning, Fashion, and Honnour; and for History (especially the French) hee is very good at it. I confesse his Age is very considerable, for young Men and Old seldome agree well togeather. Yet if Sir Henry Newton would breed his sonn out of England I should bee content to place Mun with him, for I know the youth is much a better schollar than Mun, soe it might make Mun emulate to get equall with him. . . . I pray sound Sir H. N., you may say (as from your selfe not mee), you thinke it might bee well to breed the two youths togeather. . . . I shall not let Mun and Jack bee togeather, for besides the snarling and disagreement I have oft observed betweene Brothers that are soe kept in Couples, I know theire age and humours are soe different, that they will doe much better asunder.'

This plan fell through. Sir Henry sent young Henry Newton to Dr. Duport at Trinity College, Cambridge.[2] 'I wish peace in France for my children's sake,' Sir Ralph wrote to M. Duval, 'for that's the fittest place in the world to breed upp youth, though hee that sees my Boy Mun will never beeleeve it; but you know his imperfections soe well, that neither my care nor the advantages of that civill country, can ever change his clownishness.'

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[1] *Quaint* from *coint, compt*, meaning fine, spruce (Cotgrave's *Dictionary*, about 1660).

[2] Henry died before his father. A Latin poem still exists, addressed by Dr. Duport to Sir Henry Puckering Newton.

As we have seen, he left Mun at the Hague[1] with Dr. Creighton, and they went on to Utrecht. The boy was overgrown and weak; his 'governor' wishes to consult Myen Herr Skatt (or Schott), who has a great reputation at Utrecht for his treatment of crooked children. 'If they be young,' writes Dr.

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[1] These are the lists of books and music Mun took with him :—

'Septemb : 1652. A Noate of Mun's Bookes.
 Seneca's workes in Three Vollumes. Printed at Venice.
 Virgill.
 Justin.
 Les Comentaires de Mons^r Blaise de Mont Luc.
 Secretaire de la Cour.
 Secretaire a la mode.
 Fan Linguæ Italicæ.
 Le vite del L'Imperadori.
 La Relatione della corte de Roma.
'Galateo di buone creanze, and the Translation of it into French.
'Vocabulaire in Italien and French.
'Camden's greeke Grammer.
'Lucion's dialogues in Greeke.
'Mons^r Du Val's Italien Verbes.
'Mun's Observations of all his voyage from Blois to Geneva.
'Voiture's Letters.
'A Cluvdrias Geografie.
'2 Eng : Almanacks & Young Clerks Guide.
'A Noate of Mun's Bookes for Musique and Designing.

'One Musique Booke in Folio, filled upp with Italien songs by Sig^r Archangelo at Rome.

'One other Musick Booke (but not in Follio) filled upp also at Rome by Sig^r Archangelo with Italien songs.

'Five other old Musique Bookes bought at Rome.

'One Gittarre Booke, Printed, bought at Rome.'

('Brought from Blois.)

'One Printed Booke of Chansons a dancer, made 1651.

'One Musicke Booke Bound upp in a Parchement cover, filled upp by Mons^r Andre. There is also at the other end of the Booke severall peeces for the Lute and Theorboe.

'Three other Musique Bookes wholly filled upp by Mons^r Andre.

'One greate Paper Booke for designing filled upp by Mun.'

Creighton, 'the sooner are they cured, and he selldome undertakes old people, becaus invetrat ills especiallie when they come by nature are hardlie removed ; yett hath he done such cures to wonder, upon some of 50 yeares and upward, but selldomer : from the craddle to the ages of 30 or 40 ar his patients, all sexes, ranks, qualities, and conditiones, and young people have beene brought to him from further then the uttmost parts of Shettland or the Orcades, even from Swedland, Denmark, Holsteyne, &c. And this is his way, If when he look upon the partie he fynd the defect curable he undertaks it, and wth out bargayne expects such an honest reward as the partie is or willing or able to bestow ; and trulie I could never lerne or heare but that he was an exceeding honest conscientious man. If he sees nature so defective or so much collapsed that it is incurable, he will not undertake it.' . . . 'Mun's backbone in which all the fault lies, is quite awry, and his right shoulder half a handfull lower at least then his left. Herr Skatt hath undertaken the cure, if your sonne will stay heere three quarters of a yeare ; and allreadie he is about to make harnessing for him, which your sonne is very willinge, for ought I can perceive, to undergo, though in all things els he is not a little wedded to his fancie.' Jan. 28, 1653

Dr. Creighton is anxious about the education of his own son, who will have to earn his bread. 'I am sorry you are not in a condition to provide better for your sonne,' writes Sir Ralph : 'but if March 4, 1653 you thinke it any way for his advantage to bee with me as a Page for a yeare or two; as soone as my occasions will suffer me to cross the seas againe, I shall take him: and whilst hee is with mee abroad hee shall cost you nothing: but I pray let not his being with mee hinder you from Looking after some more advantagious place for him, either with some good Marchant (as his Mother tells me she will) or otherwise, for to deale clearlely with you these bad times have brought mee into such a condition, that I can doe nothing for him but breed him, and were he not your sonne I would not take him. . . . I shall desire his Mother that while hee is with her, hee may chiefly learne to Write, Read and cast accounts which are the most necessary quallities required in a Marchant; when he is with me he shall Learne both French, & what else I conceive advantagious for him, doe not doubt it; truly I thinke ye childe (as all yours must be) is both good natured and ingenious, & therefore I doubt not you shall have comfort of him. God grant I may have comfort of mine thats with you.'

Mun's 'harness' is very irksome, especially in hot weather, and he complains that it galls him; but his governor reports in six months' time: July 8, 1653 'I may truly say the cure is allmost perfyted, yet whilst he is under Herr Skatt, I think it wer no wayes for his good to remove him. My intention was to convey him to Leyden for his learneing, but I now conceive it was God's great mercie to send us hither from the Hague for rectifeeing of his body; the soule will

(I hope) follow the better.' Edmund's own account in his British French is : 'Je suis extremement creu depuis peu, je croisque je suis aussi haut, si je ne suis plus haut que mon cousin Spenser.' Dr. Creighton writes again : 'He is very well, grows apace, and of his crookednes so allmost wholly restored, that very little difference is to be seene ; and when his clothes and cloak is on without his harness none at all, yet he weares his harness for the most part continuallie, and must I am afrayed till the next spring by which tyme Herr Skatt doth not doubt but to make him a perfyt man : and in the meane tyme becaus the weather is very hott in these moneths, he permitts him sum tymes for a two or 3 dayes together ease him self of his harness, and go in his single doublett, which I say he condiscends unto meerly to ease him from wearing iron bodies continuallie, though they be very light, and I think might well be borne at all tymes, and wer farr better borne, then left off at any tyme till the cure be finished.' July 15, 1653

The discomforts which the tutor felt were so easy (for somebody else) to bear come out vividly in Mun's letters, though the boy does not complain. The iron body fits tightly back and front, lined with soft leather ; it is fastened by Herr Skatt over his linen shirt ; Mun can neither undo it nor ease any undue pressure. His shirt in hot weather is always wet, but he cannot change it. Once a week he goes with his clean shirt over his arm, to have the armour taken off ; his shirt and the leather lining are then 'as black as a chimney.' It does not appear that the skin was washed even at the weekly dressing, only that the leather lining was renewed—'ma peau est toute ostée de sur mon estomach . . . et cela m'avoit mangé un trou dans ma chair'—at such times Herr Skatt applies a plaster. Sir Ralph asks whether the shirt could not be changed twice a week, but Mun replies that the great man has more than 2000 patients—men and women, boys and girls—that he could never get through his work if they all came twice a week, and that many keep on the harness for a month together.

The tutor continues his report: 'He growes apace upon my worde; in height ther is but little difference betweene him and I. He loves his ease very well, and his owne will above all things, and though in truth I cannot accuse him of any vice or scandall, he is civill and temperat, yet he loves his bedd too well, and is very willfull, for the which two defaults I entreat you hartilie to chide him, for upon my worde he deserves it. For his relligione I do perceive you are very sollicitous, and what I told you befor I tell you againe, he is a true protestant, for ought I can perceive, for surely he understands no other; and it is to me admirable, those that in your house of Bloy perverted him, should so ill ground him, for I can assure you, he is so farr from being able to defend any poynt of the contrary relligione, that he understands none, and this you may take upon my creditt. Ignorance of that relligione is his worst peste, yet ignorance and blind obedience among them is a great matter : and to that I beleeve his instructors in your house brought him, and to admire a goodlie outward show, and vayne pomp. And I have often in privat told him off it, but in vaine ; nor of this nor any other custome could I ever breake him in all my lyff, or draw him one inch from his will. All the morning till twelf of clock he sitts wth his brest unbuttoned, his breeches unclasped, his stockings untied about his heeles sommer and winter ; if winter he hovers over a fyre, if sommer sitts in a chayre so ill-favouredly that you wold take him for a skullion, till he buckle up to dinner when the clock striks twelf. I myself have beene oft ashamed to see, but tell him till doomes day, he never shall amend anything, so obstinat is he in what he once doth ; God mend all I beseech God, and bless you and yours.'

Sir Ralph replies : 'S^{r} I am so well acquainted with his tediousnesse, Lazinesse, and Slovenliness, and abhorre them all soe perfectly, that I must intreate you to break him of them now, for next spring wherever I am, I intend to call him for 2 or 3 monethes to me, and if he doe not quit these vile quallities before that time, hee will deprive himselfe of a greater part of my affection (and soe consequently of his Fortune too) then hee is yet aware off or perhapps hath witt to apprehend.' To his son Sir Ralph writes severely : 'Your childhood is now over, soe that you can noe longer be excused by it. Beeleeve me Mun I know your guilt and am hartily grieved to finde that no advice of mine (and of such as I have placed over you) hath heatherto had the power to make you quitt your Lazy, Slovenly and ungentlemanlike quallities.'

It is doubtful whether the obstinacy of which Dr. Creighton complained so hotly was a monopoly of his pupil's. Dr. Morley, when asked by Sir Ralph to urge some course upon the tutor, replied oracularly, 'Dr. Creighton is a Scotchman, and you know they are hardly to be removed from an opinion they once are possessed with, though it be a bad one.' Mun must have been as much aggravated as Mr. Pepys was, by the very tone of the Doctor's voice. 'To church and slept all the sermon,' writes that worthy, 'the Scot, to whose voice I am not to be reconciled, preaching.' But as Mun was the sole recipient of Creighton's sermons in 1653, he had not Pepys' refuge of being able to sleep through them.

June 21, 1663

In the meanwhile Luce Sheppard had been 'a careful husband' of Sir Ralph's goods at Blois. As engagements multiply in England he has to give up his plan of returning thither, so he writes long letters to Luce about despatching his more valuable goods to Claydon, and disposing of the rest. 'I shall sell the old fether beds, Luce writes, 'with all the expedition I can ; but I feare att very low rates, because the tickes are old, & the fethers but hens and capons fethers. I will if I can sell the 2 great fether beds allso for thay of all your goods are subject to wett in carryage.' She expects to get 'nine sols the pound for the great fether beds.' Mr. Gee is sending from Brussels: 'Sir Ralph's 4 swords tyed up in browne paper 2 & 2 together: 6 chafing dishes & one bundle of Rootes to rubbe the teeth.'

Jack is to travel home with Peg and Moll Eure. Sir Ralph wishes to make a handsome present to Madame Testard. 'I thinke my best looking glasse will bee a fit thing to give . . . tell me if it bee not enough, and what I had best add to it. . . . I think 'tis fit to give Monsieur Papin or his wife something for theire care of my goods . . . my second greate glasse may doe well, and my little Wooden Screene that goes on a screw, tell me if the foulding screene Frame is sould or not. . . . Take out the English knives from the little white wooden Box . . . to give Madame Testard or any other and then they will thinke they com purposely from England for them. Luce gives 2 single knives one of Charing cross haft, the other of sceale-skine to Madame Testard's children . . . with a white crowne, for her children love money above anything.' Sir Ralph's 'Theorboe,' and 'a new slate shuite & Cloake' that he had made for himself are to be sent to Mun if 'they may bee gotton to Brussels for about a Pistole; were they at Brussels, Cozen Gee would send them to him for a very trifle.'

'2 or 3 able D^{rs} of Physick att Paris' are to 'consulte together about Mistresse Mary what may be the best way to govarn her, and D^{r} Cosin has spoken to "the King" about touching her, & he is August 1653 graciously pleased to doe her this favour.' Luce is advised to hurry up to Paris; when she arrives 'his majesty has fallen very sicke,' so there are more delays. 'Clothes, lodging and diet ware ne'ere these excessive rates as they are att, att present'; the careful Luce will buy nothing she can possibly do without; if Jack is cold he must 'ware his old drape de seau (soie) just a corps over his summer sute.' Mary was finally touched by Charles II. 'The littell gentlewomen are both very well, only scicke for new clothes'—a malady which still attacks English and American ladies in Paris. Luce and 'her little troope' according to 'her Lady sheepe's orders' are expected at Dover: they are to take seven days in a waggon from Paris to Calais, but they are detained a week at Abbeville, the country being full of soldiers, and can only proceed with a costly and troublesome guard.

November 1653

There are better accounts of Edmund; he 'embraces his studies with more cheerfulness and industry.' 'In Christmas holidays which is heere yet observed,' Dr. Creighton writes, 'he wold be loath to be pinched in his allowances. He hath now three Masters besids my self, who receive monethly pay, and they follow him close, and he talks well with them, and is very hartie and well in health.' Mun learns the lute from an Englishman, Theodore Berry; natural philosophy from Monsieur Du Roy, 'very famous in all parts for his science,' and is beginning Greek: he wishes to have drawing lessons, he has worked in charcoal, and knows something of painting; his master has taught 'deux Milourds Anglais Spenser et Gerard.'

Myen Herr Schott's bill is a heavy one, 'he is at great charges in maintayning 16 or 17 servants daily, and three sonnes very expert in his art, that do nothing but work in iron and steele, and brace and unbrace crooked limbs. They who have received benefitt by him use to present him with a goode peece of plate, or perhapps a round summe of monie, over and above his accounts; which they do cheerfullie, and he receives thankfullie, for he is noe unrasonable man. He hath done a notable cure on Mr. Verney.' Mun wishes to be allowed a servant, 'Herr Schott sayes it wold much conduce to the perfyting of his cure, for hee wold instruct this servant to gird and ungird him, that wheresoever he removes there shall never noe other help him.' Edmund declares he does not need a servant, because he is helpless, 'car je suis soldat ici aux paiis bas, dans la compagnie du Colonel Cromwel et me scay servir moi mesme.' Jan. 1654

'For Leyden, I have no fancy to it,' writes Sir Ralph to the Doctor; ''tis too private for a youth of his yeares, that must see company at convenient times and studdy men as well as bookes, or else his learning may make him rather ridiculous then esteemed. A meere schollar is but a woefull creature, but if you can approve of carrying him to the Hague my good friend D^r Morley will be ready to put him into good March 20, 1654 and civill company, and advise him from his follies and perhapps that may worke more uppon him, then all that you or I can saye for I have oft observed that young men are apter to receave counsell from strangers, then such as have authority over them.'

Mun manages to dance 'girt in his armour; it was in very good company, and he was requested to it.' Sir Ralph enters kindly into his wish to go into the best society. 'As for his acquaintance w^ch^ you say are noble, but expensive,' he writes to his tutor, 'I shall rather keep him where he is . . . for now he is of yeares to be in company, & the best company is always the best cheap if wee consider all things. . . . Truly I had rather he should spend five pounds in good noble company then five pence among the meane & ordinary sort of people.' He again asks anxiously whether Mun smokes, drinks, or swears.

May 1654 Dr. Creighton replies: 'I call him constantly every day at 8 of clock & by 9 get him readie to his books, at half eleven his Luteist comes, after which he makes readie for his ordinarie, but all the afternoon it is a great chance if I see him till the next morning at 8; I desired you to chide him for this Loss of tyme & keeping company, I could not accuse him of sins of Commission, No tobacconist, No swearer or drunkard, that I could ever fynde, but for omissions I am displeased. . . . To the Hague I have no disposition for three reasons; first the ayre there is not so goode, the dyett here better &

cheaper, upon both which, ayre & dyett he thrives notablie, god be praised : growes lustie, tall & manly every day : Next our friend D^{r} Morley is going this summer to Frankendal with his mistress [the Queen of Bohemia]. Thirdlie I have no friend there will trust me for one weeke's meat if I want. . . . Herr Schott is paid nobly as f^{m} a gentleman, & it was well received : & I beleeve he was selldome or nev^{r} more generously dealt wth.'

The relation between the tutor and his pupil came to an end soon after this. We get an amusing glimpse of Dr. Creighton as Dean of Wells in 'Pepys' Diary': 'The great Scotchman' was preaching at Whitehall before King Charles and the Duke and Duchess of York his text 'Roll yourself in the dust,' 'his application the most comical that ever I heard in my life . . . saying that it had been better for the poor Cavalier never to have come with the King into England again,' as his enemies were better treated in Newgate, than his friends were at Whitehall. By which it would appear that rolling in the dust was not very congenial to the Dean personally, but his fortunes improved.[1] It is quite cheering to come upon a letter of his, some sixteen years later, in which there is quite a respectful reference to his slovenly, self-willed pupil, and the harassed tutor himself, now in satin and lawn sleeves, is full of hospitable schemes for entertaining his clergy. Sir Ralph writes from London : 'Mun . . . The bispp

March 7, 1662

June 16, 1670

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[1] In the Cathedral at Wells there is a handsome lectern with this

of Bath and Wells was with me, and hee expresses greate kindnesses to you and me ; hee is to be consecrated on Sunday ; hee wants Venison very much, soe I have sent for a Buck for him, which hee takes very kindly'; and this is the friendly letter that the Bishop himself writes, with a Scotchman's somewhat sarcastic view of the ceremonial of his consecration.

July 20, 1670 'My noble and never to be forgotten freind, Sr Raph Varney, I am now looking homewards, haveing finished the other revolutiones of my Seales both great and small, as intricate to my apprehension, as the mystical seales in St. John's Apocalypse. And calling to scrutiny what I have to do, or what dutie I have left undone, before I went, I found your great favors both old and new with fresh indelible characters engraven in my mynd : which stirdd me up to write to your selfe and your thrice worthy sonne my quondam charge beyond seas, as being very sorry that I have lyen so long silent, from expressing those deare affections, which I shall ever acknowledge I ow you for all your singular loves, from tyme to tyme, even from the worst of tymes to the best, if any yett in these confusiones can be called but tolerable goode tymes. Accept then of my most humble and hartie thanks for all your old and new goodnesses, the favor of your venisone, the honor of your most kynd and Wellcom company, your perpetuall countenance to

inscription: 'Dr. Robert Creyghton, upon his returne from fifteene yeares exile with our soveraigne Lord Kinge Charles the 2d, made Deane of Wells in the yeare 1660 gave this brazen Deske with God's Holy Worde thereon to the saide Cathedrall Church.'

mee, even from the first tyme I knew your self, or your thrice Noble father stand and fall at Edgehill, under the standard Royall of England untill this day: And lett me assure you, you have not a servant more faythfull to you, or the interest of your family, or who should be more glade of any occasion to serve you and yours to the uttmost of my abilitie, then I who shall ever subscribe my self

'Noble S^r^
'Your most obliged and most affectionate
'freind and servant
'ROBERT BATH & WELLS.'

Unhappily prosperity and venison agreed with the good bishop less well than the bread and water of adversity, and he only lived two years to enjoy his episcopal honours.

CHAPTER IV.

STEWARD, PARSON, AND SQUIRE.

1650–1655.

'I have heard of some kind of men, that put quarrels purposely on others to taste their valour.'—TWELFTH NIGHT.

THE most important personage at Claydon during the ten years of Sir Ralph Verney's absence was William Roades, the steward. He and his father had worked on the estate, man and boy, for more than half a century in positions of trust. From 1610 onwards John Roades' handwriting, as Sir Edmund Verney's bailiff, occurs constantly in tithe receipts made out for the parson, Richard Askew, to sign, and in other documents.

A legacy is left to his wife, in the will made by Sir Edmund in 1622, before starting to join Prince Charles at Madrid: 'I give unto Anne Roades, wife of John Roades my servant, for the care which she hath had in breeding my children when they were young, Tenne poundes.' As the children of John and Anne Roades were about the ages of Sir Edmund's elder children, Anne probably nursed her foster-children with her own, either at the House or in her home, as in the arrangement Mary Verney made for her baby in 1647.[1] Their intimacy as children would account for the familiar terms in which Sir Ralph and his brothers and sisters wrote in after life to William Roades, speaking of each other by their Christian names, sending their love to him and to his wife, and signing 'Your affectionate friend'; while Sir Edmund, in writing to John Roades or his son, had signed simply 'Your master E. V.'

When Sir Edmund made his last will in March 1639, before starting with King Charles for the Scotch war, he left to John Roades, his 'faithful servant and bailiff at Claydon,' an annuity of £5. Roades was by this time a widower; the burial of 'Anne, wife of John Roads,' is recorded in the Middle Claydon parish register on August 20, 1636. The old man is still styled bailiff in 1639, but since the year 1625 his son's signature had been associated with his in the estate receipts, and the work of steward had gradually devolved on the younger and more capable man. Sir Edmund's detailed and careful directions sent from Scotland about the letting of farms, the feeding up of horses, and the storing of farmyard manure are all to William Roades. There is a letter, written in the last year of Sir Edmund's life, showing his kind care for his old steward: 'Will Roads . . . your father has sent to me about that ash wood, and the poor ould man offers to pay for it. Tell him I cannot wright to him now, but that I have sent to

Dec. 22, 1641

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[1] Vol. ii. p. 293.

you (to) lett him have that wood or any other wood to keepe him from coald. Trewly I am much grieved to see that I cannot prevaile with him, for his owne good, but because he understands it not and has foolish jealousys in his head, I will saye noe more of it.' Sir Ralph notes in his calendar of 'Letters from Roades,' May 1, 1644, that 'John Roades died on Good Friday last.' That he had made but scant provision for his old age appears from a letter of Besse Heath's, another old servant and annuitant; Will Roades told her 'in coller' that 'hee was not such a foole as his father to toyle all his life and dye a Beggar.'

April 26, 1650

William Roades and his family have recently acquired a transatlantic reputation, as the researches of Mr. Henry T. Waters have brought out their connection with the ancestors of George Washington, the Father of the United States.[1] Mr. Waters has identified the original emigrants, John and Lawrence, as the sons of the Rev. Lawrence Washington ejected, as a Malignant Royalist, in 1643 from the living of Purleigh in Essex. The will of Andrew Knowling, of Tring, dated January 13, 1649–50, makes Lawrence Washington, second son of the Rector of Purleigh, his heir, leaving legacies 'to Amphilis Washington, my daughter in lawe (and mother of the said Lawrence) and unto William

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[1] See the New England Historical and Genealogical Register for October, 1889. Boston, U.S.A

Roades my sonne in Lawe,' &c., who was left guardian of his heir. Mr. Waters suggested that the widowed mother of William Roades and Amphillis must have married Andrew Knowling, in which case Sir Edmund's old steward John Roades would have been the direct ancestor of George Washington. But the Verney letters do not bear this out. Anne Roades died some eight years before her husband; Dr. Denton calls Andrew Knowling 'W. R.'s father in law,' which might still mean his stepfather; Jan. 28, 1650 but Sir Ralph, in a summary of this letter in his calendar, writes: 'W. Roades' wife's father is dead.' March 4, 1650 Amphillis therefore was not a Roades at all; her maiden name has not been discovered, nor that of Hannah, wife of William Roades, who was probably Knowling's step-daughter.

William Roades was a man of good ability, and had raised himself above his father's social position. He rented Finemore from Sir Ralph, and lived probably at Finemore Lodge—inhabited in the preceding generation by Uncle Urian Verney and Lettice Giffard. The farm included some of the best land, and the most beautiful position for a house, in Middle Claydon parish. He is described as a 'Gentleman' in Andrew Knowling's will, when his co-trustee, John Dagnall of Tring, is called a yeoman, and he was able to give handsome marriage portions to his children. When the widow Amphillis Washington died in 1655, it may well be that their uncle William Roades encouraged the young men to emigrate. He was in possession of full information about the American plantations, as he had managed Tom Verney's business in Virginia and Barbadoes, and had sent out several Claydon men. Both lads prospered in the New World, and had property in land and in tobacco to bequeath at their deaths, with kindly remembrance of the relations left behind in England. Strong Royalists as they were, they must have carried with them across the Atlantic stories of Claydon and of Sir Edmund Verney; of their uncle Thomas, the page whose death-bed Sir Edmund had defended from the Spanish priests; of their cousin Henry Washington, the Royalist colonel, and 'Governor of the ever loyal city of Worcester,' and whatever else would make a winter's tale for their children by the log-fire, about the mother country and the old home.

When Mary Verney returned to Claydon in 1646 she was fairly satisfied with the condition of the property, and she commended the Steward's efforts to defend his master's goods from the marauding propensities of several near relations. It may be that 'W. R.' was a good servant, but a bad master, and that he was hardly fit for such uncontrolled authority as had latterly devolved on him. His duties at Claydon during the absence of the owner were arduous and complicated. It was he who received the rents and sold the cattle and produce of the land which Sir Ralph farmed himself; it was he who paid the weekly exactions of the Parliament, which by favour he was allowed to send up once a month. He had to furnish the 'portions' to the nine younger members of the family, and after all these payments to save a scanty pittance for the poor master in exile. He had to hold the balance true between his many conflicting duties. Even Tom, though he is always abusing him, never casts a doubt upon his probity, and Henry says to Ralph, 'I confess I thinke a hath done well considderinge the times & his greate payments in yo^r absence.'

Sir Ralph was constantly complaining that 'W. R.'s' letters did not give him sufficiently precise information; but then he was notoriously difficult to satisfy on this score; a tenant 'might have beene burried & risen againe before I had knowne it. W. R. thinks it needless to acquainte me with anythinge.' Sir Ralph wrote from Rome 'that Sir R[oger] B[urgoyne] loving hawking in my woods, sayd hee was sorry to see such ill husbandry there, and that 'twas an ill signe, when ye Bayliffe did rise, and the Master Fall.' To check his steward's management he had asked both the family lawyer, 'Uncle John Denton,' and Frank Drake to visit the farms and inspect the accounts at intervals. But as Dr. William Denton was at once the busiest and the most capable man in the family, this work, like much else, was gradually left to him. 'It is an ill cooke cannot licke his owne fingers,' writes the Doctor, 'but lett me once finger your rents and then get me out againe if you can, however it is the best

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way, for y^u had better lett me have them then W^m R.'

The disputes between William Roades and Mr. and Mrs. Aris, which had been such a trouble to Mary Verney in 1647, blazed up again fiercely at intervals. Sir Ralph's friends at home justified the Rector; but Sir Ralph, who naturally wished to have a monopoly of the abuse of his own steward, gained quite a fresh insight into his merits when the Rector complained of him.

The Rev. John Aris (Arris, Ayris, or Aras), son of 'John Aris of county Gloucester pleb:' was some seven years older than Sir Ralph, and like him had been educated at Magdalen, Oxford. He matriculated at seventeen, took his degree five years later, in 1628, and was made Vicar of Steeple Claydon; in 1630 he was appointed by Sir Edmund Verney to the rectory of Middle Claydon. Mrs. Aris had doubtless many unrecorded virtues, but fame has unkindly preserved little else concerning her than the echo of her shrewish tongue. Claydon owes Mr. Aris a debt of gratitude for the care with which, during the twenty-seven years of his incumbency, he kept the parish registers, which had been utterly neglected before. He had come to Claydon in the prosperous days of the family; he had since shared in their adversity; he had buried Dame Margaret Verney and Dame Mary, and was in much anxiety on his own account in the evil days that had come upon the Church. The country parsons of Buckinghamshire suffered less than some of their brethren from Puritan persecution. Although Peel, the Vicar of Wickham, 'was absolutely the first man of all the clergy whom the party began to fall upon,' and William Oakeley of Hillesden shared the imprisonment of the Dentons after the siege; only nine clergymen in the whole county seem to have been dispossessed. In many a quiet parish, where the Rector was beloved, and as far as possible protected, by the landowners and the people, the registers show an unbroken record of baptisms, marriages, and burials; where the Prayer-book was not openly used, the prayers were partially repeated from memory; and in some Bibles the Psalms were marked in the margin with the days of the month, that the same portions might be read in the old familiar fashion on the same days. But at best a parson like Mr. Aris was at the mercy of any malcontent who chose to give information against him, and the tithes were difficult to collect. Dr. Denton suggests that Sir Ralph might help the Rector in this matter.

Sir Ralph writes: 'For his Tythes, let him compare it with his other Parish, and then tell me if he have reason to complaine. If a Parson (in these licentious times) make a quarrell for a trifle, though it bee his due, he may sooner conjure upp 20 froward spirits than allay one. By the best enquiry I can make noe towne in the country pays theire Tythes better. . . . But if you finde hee is not payd to the full for any churche ground I keepe in my hands, let me Aug. 1650

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know and hee shall not loose a farthing—but I love not to meddle with petty disputes between him & the tenants.' Peace was restored by Dr. Denton's good offices, but the Rector was not a man to let sleeping dogs lie. Sir Ralph writes to Dr. Denton from Lyons: 'W. R. now writes me word, M^r Aris sent for him and after a long debate they parted very good friends, & remained soe about 3 months, till a slanderous booke appeared against him; he tells me the Parson saies that after they were made friendes, he endeavoured to call it back againe and being 3 moneths before it appeared sure hee might have donn it; I would know the truth, but not have M^r Aris know I heard of it. . . . W. R. desires my leave to vindicate himselfe.' 'Betty is now with Parson Aris,' writes Sir Ralph, 'who is like to be sequestered; the Parson imputes much of it to W. R. & to the alehouse haunters.' Doctor saw Mr. Aris' book by chance at Green's Norton. 'W. R. was not named (though p'happs hinted at) in it, but at the end, he printed a letter which D^r thinks W. R. stormes at. Certainly Aris had wrong, but D^r ever told him hee tooke the wrong way to right himselfe.' Sir Ralph's own verdict upon this ill-timed publication is characteristic: 'A Foole could not have made the sermon, nor would a wise man have printed it.'

Dr. Denton writes to pacify the Steward: 'Will, . . . I understood that M^r Aris is informed against, by some of the towne to make him a Delinquent. I doe beleeve there is more spite & spleene than truth in this businesse; if any prejudice by any false accusation doe come to him, it will I feare light uppon Raph alsoe, for if he should be ousted of his livinge, the Committee in all such cases presents, and not the Patron, & if they should present a pryinge parson (as there are very few that are not) as goings stand, I doubt he might much prejudice Raph. . . . I know there have beene some differences betweene you, & therefore I think you are the fittest man to fish out the knavery of the plott and combination.'

July 1652

Sir Ralph writes from Amsterdam: 'I am sorry to see the Parson expresse soe much heate & rancour against W. R. on all occations, but all that he saies in this letter is uppon Hearesay. . . . For though W. R. will sometimes drink too much, yet I beleeve hee will put out other company then his owne sonne at such a time; I feare some medling people Blow the Coales between him & the Parson, who perhapps is too apt to credit all reports against a man he loves not.'

John Roades the younger was not a man to increase the reputation of the family. 'W. R.'s son, I know, is noe Solomon, nor sober man & he had very little or noe portion with his wife; but his owne Father hath certainley been very bountifull, for W. R. himselfe writ mee word, hee will have at least 400*l.* in his purse which is well for a beginner. . . . I am glad the Parson and his wife can lay nothing to my charge but a negative unkindnesse. . . . 'Tis true I never writ a letter to the Toune in generall with a formal superscription or addresse—TO ALL MY TENANTS OF ALL AGES, SEXES AND CONDITIONS IN THE PARISH OF CLAYDON, yett I did write to W. R. that I desired the Parson should have his dues of all my Tenants, and that the Rate Tythes should be duely payed him. . . . If ever I see the Parson (without his wife) I know wee shall bee friends, both before and after we speake of this businesse, but if his Wife bee present, I cannot promise myself that happinesse.'

In August 1652, Sir Ralph hears that the Rector is dangerously ill with 'a scurvy swelling in his neck. I hope and pray for M^r^ Aris' recovery, & should account his deathe a greate misfortune, but if he dye, charge W. R. from me, to use his wife with all the respect & kindnesse that can bee, and if shee would not staye in the Parsonage house, nor goe to her owne in the towne, let her bee in what house of mine shee pleases till her owne bee fitted for her, and let her want for nothing that hee can helpe her to of mine. And I pray by entring a caveat or otherwise, take care noe Pragmaticall fellow get the living, & put me to a suite to get him out again.' In October Dr. Denton writes: 'M^r^ Aris . . . is past the worst and walks abroade againe, & long may you live togeather, for if he be not very honest, & very much your servant mangre all disputes, I am very much deceaved.'

Sir Ralph meanwhile was not easy about W. R.'s management of the estate, and was eager that Dr. Denton should look into it during his summer holiday. 'You need not go to Stow, for want of roome at Hillesdon, for you well know Claydon is neare & big enough, and therefore I pray let your summer quarters be there. W. R. will not let you nor your company starve, but if you fast 'tis healthful; and least you should bee idle, I have now writ to him to give an account to you as I formerly appointed him to do of Frank Drake. . . . I never saw any accounts (but those you keepe of mine) in soe much order and yet I see you will cleare them farther. Oh that all were well, & I were with you there!'

Sept. 4, 1652

'Deare Raph,' writes Dr. Denton, 'I have beene at Claydon where I staid from Satterday to Thursday, to as little purpose as one would wish besides eatinge and drinking. W. R. had done nothing in order to y^e stating of the accounts but did beleeve they were right . . . at last he told me he could not gett them ready till Monday, soe then I thought it vain to stay there in expectation any longer, & therefore have appointed him to bringe them to me hither. He & I are at as great a lose about the accounts, & when he was non plus'd then he would get home & fetch those papers to rectify it, (O that he would) & went againe & againe & fetched paper after paper, & ne'er a one to the purpose.' Probably this confusion was due to the habits in which Roades indulged when 'he put out all other company,' at any rate it was past the Doctor's power to clear it up, and he writes in his dry vein when Sir Ralph is returning: 'Be sure you bringe patience for you have a couple of knaves to your Accomptants, that are resolved to try what mettle you are made of; if they have not theire clowne craft to make you sitt downe by your losse be it right or wronge, they are fooles as well as knaves.' 'I will not quit you,' replied Sir Ralph, 'for any sollicitour in the world.' Will Roades himself was not altogether easy. In an angry moment he had said 'some scornefull things'—that he expected to be cashiered on his master's return, and that Nick Aris must succeed him. The sting of this lay in the fact that Nick Aris was the Rector's brother.

Of all Sir Ralph's private creditors Aunt Isham had been the most unreasonable, but Sir Ralph hoped soon to be able to satisfy her better than 'by the Bare Bond of such a Wanderinge Fellowe,' as he had styled himself for many years. 'I cannot tell what will bee left for the subsistance of my selfe & children,' he wrote, after reviewing his financial position, and 'to pay those annuities & other ordinary payments issuing out of my estate; soe that I thinking my Fortune more plentifull than perhapps it is, may possibly plung my selfe into another debt, which to me is not lesse torture then the supposed paines of Purgatory.'

On Sir Ralph's return to England at the end of January 1653, after nearly ten years' absence, all his friends and relations were clamorous to see him, and some months elapsed before he was able to settle down at Claydon after a round of visits. Many changes had taken place in the family: Susan and Edmund had both died; the other brothers and sisters wrote to welcome him home after their manner. Tom was detained by very particular business from waiting upon his brother, being in fact in durance vile in the Fleet. Henry, who in middle life played the rôle of a young man as naturally as Sir Ralph played that of an old one, was prevented by an equally characteristic engagement from kissing his brother's hand; 'beeinge att my Lord of Petterborough's,'[1] Henry's foible for paying court to great people was well known in the family, 'My noble Earle tells mee hee has this weeke a progress of pleasure to take, for 10 or 12 dayes, to visset his freindes; soe that untile that bee over, hee will not dissmiss mee on noe pretence whatsoever, though I pleaded with him on this occation moddestly for my liberty.' Sir Ralph could wait without undue impatience. Three weeks elapse, and then Henry writes again: 'The last weeke my Lord's Lady marcht to London, and his Lordship beinge left a lone, is tyred of the countrey, and when a puts the vote to mee, I saye nothing but to London, to London, for noe jorney can please my minde soe well ass the assurance I have to imbrace my deare Brother.' But their meeting seems to have been still further delayed. March 7, 1653

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[1] Henry Mordaunt, second Earl, commanded a regiment of Foot in the Royal Army, 1644; after the Restoration was Captain-General and Governor of Tangier, &c.; died in 1697.

Penelope Denton is 'in a very indigent condition: they say she scarce eats any flesh meat twice in a weeke, not for want of stomach, but of meanes to buy it.' Sir Ralph takes up again his old position of adviser and helper in all family troubles: he is soon trying to disentangle the complicated web of John Denton's debts, and tells Pen that their accounts have kept him up till 'neare one a clock' in the morning, and that in earnest he is so weary and sleepy he can scarcely write.

Margaret Elmes longs to be in London or to meet her brother at Claydon, 'the only plase as I have hopes to see you in, for nethor I know not how to invite you bereson [by reason] as most of my frinds receive soe coole a wellcome from those as I wish the had not.' As Mr. Elmes had just before complained that his brother lodged at his bailiff's, for fear of a cold reception from his wife, they were pretty well matched. Poor Peg, however, was full of love to her brother, and welcomed him, as she says, 'in this silent language' by making him a cake for his 'breckfaste.' Her cousin Knightly had been urging Mr. Elmes to give her a fixed allowance for her clothes. 'Mr. Elmes seemed to him as he was willing it showlde be soe, but he frumped att me all the day after for it, but soe I get it I care not for that. . . . I coulde not thancke my cosen, Mr. Elmes being bie. . . . I should hardly take under 40*l.* a yere, as much a bove as he will. I am seartin nevor to have a farthing moare from him in the way of gift as other men doe to theare wife. . . . I am exstremely owght of all kinde of linin under thinges as you cannot immaien, & by Mickellmas I should want gownes as much, for I shall not have one to put on, soe as all that I showlde receive then wolde not clothe me, and if I run behind hand att the furst, I shall nevor get befoare againe. Now pray stand for as much as you can for me.'

It must have been a relief to Sir Ralph to turn from Pen's poverty and Peg's quarrels to the domestic happiness of his sister Cary. He had left her, amidst all the anxieties of the Civil War: her infant son Thomas died at Claydon in December 1644; her husband Sir Thomas Gardiner was killed the following summer, and her daughter Margaret, born after his death, developed a weakness in her eyes, which was a life-long trial to her and to her mother. Her troubles were much aggravated by the unkindness and neglect of her husband's family, but in 1653 Cary was no longer lonely and defenceless. Though retaining her old name, Lady Gardiner had married John Stewkeley of Preshaw in Hampshire, a younger son with a comfortable income. He was a widower older than herself, with daughters—Margaret, Anne, and Ursula—who were growing up to womanhood, and a boy William, now aged thirteen. He was a man of kind heart and good education, fond and proud of his wife, and very kind to her delicate little girl. Cary proved herself a good-natured stepmother to his children and a capable and genial mistress of his house. She was much excited by her brother's return: she longed for him to see her husband and her own baby boy John, and wanted to rush up to London, even, as she expressed it, 'to the prodigy of my helth, which I enjoy lettill of.' As this could not be, she was bent upon having a family gathering at Preshaw; Moll and Betty, who often stayed with her, should meet their brother there. 'I am shur Harry Verney will waight on you highther to,' and 'my husband would be joyed to give you his first salute.'

Cary wishes to include sister Peg in her exuberant hospitality; but as Peg knows that for her to ask her husband is to be refused, Sir Ralph is entrusted with the negotiation. Mercifully Brother Elmes is just 'about making a voyage into Walles to visit a sister'; he implies that his wife means to go to Preshaw with or without his leave. 'But this I shall say shee carieth herself so bigg to mee, & is of so extreame a ruling spiritt, that for my part I shall not endure it any longer than my discretion forceth mee, which will not bee long,' and then raking up his old quarrel with Tom he concludes: 'I desire to bee looked upon as one that hath been much ill used by a brother and sister of yours, but for your owne particular I have no reason but I may stile myself your brother in Law and humble servant.' Peg gets her visit, but 'shee will goe to purgitury when she goes home, God helpe her.'

Both Sir Ralph's younger sisters had grown into womanhood since his departure. Mary has no settled home, and is in delicate health. In flowery terms she assures him that the news of his safe return 'hath afoarded . . . me balme to heale me againe. 'I shalle thinke everryday a eare tell wee meete ; I will not hinder you from your more sceareous Imployments any longer . . . your reall Afeckestionat sister and sarvant, MARY VERNEY.' A letter was to Betty, as to Moll, an arduous effort. She was scarcely ten years old when her brother left England. He had spent much upon her schooling, but at nineteen she does not seem able to spell her own name. 'DEARE BROTHER, Yesterday came the weall comen nuse to mee that I could desire to heare of, which wos of your safe Arivall to Ingland, & now I have hope for to bee made hapy in knowing on, how I can scars remember, the fas of, yet I doo acknowleg you to have bin a father to mee, & wish it ware in my power to macke retribution but that I am able to doo in nothing but in the extrem loving of you & yours, in wich I shall never fail in Your afecnate sister E. VEARNEY.'

Feb. 13, 1654 The old Countess of Devonshire, Lady Warwick's mother, left Sir Edmund a legacy which her son, Edward Wortley, sends to Sir Ralph. He is 'desirous to put the Legacye your noble mother left my Father into a Peece of Plate, and if you please to let mee know her Armes that I may engrave them on it, I shall take it for a double favour.'

March 7, 1653 Sir Richard Browne, now a disconsolate widower, writes from Brest : 'Sir, your most obleginge letter hath found mee here in a remote corner of the world, to which my disasters have for a time confined mee, & where it is noe small consolation to mee to see that I yet live in the Memory of such worthy freinds as yourselfe in whose more happy condition & sepatriation I take particular contentment, as one that really wisheth you as different & contrary a fortune to my owne, as may be.'

Sir Ralph's preparations to set up house again at Claydon give us a very complete picture of his household and housekeeping. He had written to Dr. Denton before reaching England. 'If I must keepe house which I am willing to doe if you advise it, I will keepe but one woeman kind, who must wash my small Linnen (bed & board linnen shall bee put out) and cleane all both house & Vessell which she may doe for I supp not: if she could cooke also I should not bee sorry, and for men I intend to keepe only a Coachman & 2 footmen; or a Vallet de chambre & one footman; or which I like much better a Page & a Footman, but if persons of my condition keepe not pages in England I will not bee singuler, though they are used both heere and in France, & by reason they ride behind the coach, not in it, are better than any Vallet de chambre. If I keepe any other meniall servant, I thinke twill bee a young Cooke, since Besse Heath & her husband have noe children, I shall not scruple at their being married: but imploy them at Claydon if they desire it; but I shall not sue to them, nor can hee bee usefull to me at

London (for there wants neither Bakers nor Brewers) but at Claydon, hee may for both & also take care of my stuff, for he knowes it, & how to order it better then his wife, my mother bredd him to it, but I cañot keepe them all y^e yeare, because I am like to bee 3 or 4 months in a yeare at Claydon, & that only by fits & spurts.' His mother's housekeeper, Mrs. Alcock, who married 'an ordinary grazier,' had continued to live at Claydon, and farmed the grass-land round the house.

'Tell me what Family M^{rs} Alcock hath in my house, what Napkins, Table Cloathes, Sheetes & Pillowbeeres; what store of Beds she can make both for Masters & for Servants, with Blankets & coverlets, and how many of them will have curtains; also what silver spoones and salts she can lend me. I presume there are dishes, pyplates, candlesticks, Basons, Wooden Trenchers, Beere & Wine glasses, greate & small candles, spitts & such like matters of my owne in the house already. . . . Tell me what scollop dishes there are at Claydon for Frute. . . . Tell me the prices of Beefe, Mouton, Veale, Lambe, Rabbets, Pidgions & Poultry; Butter & green-morning-milke cheeze.' May 1653

Sir Ralph's larder was evidently well stocked; he has also a variety of game in the autumn: his pheasants and partridges are said to be a worthy 'present for my Lord Maier, for hee hath noe such ware in his shoppes' in London. The garden is to 'bee planted with ordinary usefull herbes, if there is noe Borrage nor Burnet, plant or set it quickly.' Luce Sheppard is buying French shrubs and vegetables. 'I pray forget not to bring the seeds of Philloray vulgaire that I sent for in my last, I beleeve they are very com̃on and cheap, but if you find them otherwise bring but a pint, but I would bee glad of two or three quarts on reasonable termes, bring over some five or six souls (sous) worth of Cardon d'Espaigne y^{e} best & ffairest comes from Tours, also some good Mellon & seeds of Roman Lettuce, Lettuce Frize [curled], Chou de Millan, Chou frize, bestow about 30 or 40 sols on all these seeds and such others as you think fit beside what you pay for the seeds of the Philloray. . . . I also desire any sorts of eateable grapes out of the best & choycest gardens ; give the gardener what you thinke fit, a few of them will serve my turn . . . in my old garden there was woont to bee good Eateing grapes of severall sorts.'

He continues his directions to Roades : 'Tell me if the Locks & Glasse windowes are in order, if not glaze the Parlour & my Studdy by it, the Dining Roome & Best Chamber : tell me if the Water pipes are in order, & let the cisterne be clenged. Repaire the chickin house next the slaughter house quickly as you & I agreed, that I may not bee troubled with Workmen when I come. Tell me if the grate is upp in the Kitchin Chimney, & what Wood, Seacoales, & Charcoales, you have ready for me . . . Tell me if there bee not white sillibub pots in the house. If M^{rs} Alcock cannot brew Ale, a brewer must, 6 Barrels for my table and the Hall, strong, will not be stale enough in time, I doe it for any of my Tenants that may come to me, tis cheaper then Wine and will please them better . . . make them welcome, & being they have nothing but Bread, Cheeze & Drinke it must be good & in plenty too, or else, they may justly blame both you & mee.'

For his own table he sends down 'in a Browne Hamper 2 dozen of stone Bottles with White Wine. They are all sealed with Black Wax, & by one Seale, I pray observe if the Seales are whole, & set them into sand in the Wine cellar by themselves, & sometimes cast Water (that's well salted) upon the sand. Six stone bottles 'of Vergus, Vinaigre, and Inke,' follow later in 'a greate hamper,' to be put in the cellar but not in sand. 'I hope you have few chickins, & other poultry to bee a little fleshed, before I come, or else they will not bee to bee eaten at present.' Roades is also to get 'some young Turkies, though they are noe bigger then a chicking of 6 pence, or 8 pence price.'

Sir Ralph sends down a new cook, but is afraid that 'Idlenesse may spoyle him,' so the Steward is to exhort him to use his leisure in learning to read and write, and in baking French bread in the great 'Brasse Baking Pans.' The cook greatly prefers the making of hare pies to literary pursuits; 'hee is wilde to get a gunn' to shoot the hares; but Sir Ralph will not have the hares shot, or his game disturbed in May. He is anxious to know how the cook 'carries himselfe,' and whether Mrs. Alcock approves of him. 'I shall suffer noe man that's either debauch or unruly in my house, nor doe I hier any servant that takes tobacco, for it not only stinks upp my house, but is an ill example to the rest of my Family.' Michel or Michaud Durand, 'the very little foot-boy,' who was with Sir Ralph in Brussels, has gone to Blois to learn how to make pastry and good French fancy bread, and is to return to Claydon when he is perfected. Sir Ralph desires Roades to 'tast the Vinaigre, & if it bee not very good let me presently know it, & I will send downe some. . . . Questionlesse there is White Wheat, enough about Wendover & Missenden, any Baker will tell you & if there be, write to any discreete honest man there of your acquaintance to buy you half a quarter of the Best & Whitest to make Bread; when any cartes come upp from Claydon, they will carry home for a small matter, & that will bee cheaper then to send a Horse & man purposely.'

Sir Ralph, alive to the importance of a good water supply, thanks Mr. Abell of East Claydon for his courtesy in letting him bring down water from a Spring which has supplied Claydon House ever since. 'Perhapps M^{r} Sergeant at Brill can take the height of it with a Water Levell, & my owne (Spring) too, & I hope they goe high enough to come into the Leaden Cesterne in the Water House, as it now stands, without any forceing of them upp. Tast & smell the Water of that Spring & of my owne too that's neare it, & try if either of them will beare soape; but doe it privately.' Coals were selling in London at 27*s.* a chaldron, having just fallen from 33*s.* After this they had to be carted down to Claydon. Sir Ralph is assured that he may 'buy Wood cheaper than coales at these rates, considering the carriages.' The Claydon woods supplied many villages with fuel. In the autumn of 1650, when there had been no sale at Claydon for two years, the poor were up in arms: all the hedges were pulled down, and they would 'not be kept out': 'The country wants wood, for all their old stock is gone.' So Sir Ralph authorises a great clearing in Muxwell Wood, 'where there is at least three yeares sale.' The fire-wood yields from 4*l.* to 10*l.* an acre, according to the season—generally 7*l.* to 8*l.*

There is a most interesting list of eleven cottages in the 'towne of Middle Claydon,' showing how many 'cowes commoning belonges to each,' making a total of twenty-one cows kept by eleven families. But now, after two centuries and a half of progress, not a single cottager in Middle Claydon keeps a cow, and the common has entirely disappeared. The rents of the cottages appear to have been 16*s.*, 18*s.* 4*d.*, and 30*s.* a year. William Tomkins writes to the Steward about an apprentice from Claydon:—

'Mr. Rhodes, my love remembered unto you, Sir, I would desire you to be mindfull of me conserning a prentise. I shall not take one under sixtine July 28, 1653 or twentie poundes, I shall indevor to teach him my two profetions which I use. Thus leaveing you to the Allmightie I remaine your Frend to command, WILLIAM TOMKINS.' Unhappily we do not know what Tomkins' 'two profetions' were. The fee sounds high, as Evelyn the next year bound his 'laquay Tho: Headley, to a carpenter, giving with him five pounds and new clothing: he thrived very well & became rich.'

Sir Ralph warmly thanks Lady Gawdy 'for her extraordinary charity to my man Mathew; certainly though her Balsome did him much good, her care added more to his cure.' Mathew retained a grateful recollection of Lady Gawdy's nursing, and with Sir Ralph's approval he entered her service later as butler, to her great comfort. We hear of him once more in 1662, when Doll Leeke writes from Croweshall: 'Your servant Mathew goes with my lord pellou into Iarland, my lady Desmond pressed Sir Charls very much, for he beleves it a preferment, and upon that acount perted with him.' There are many evidences of Sir Ralph's personal knowledge of the farmers and their families, and of his kindly interest in them and in the labourers.

If his labour bill has to be diminished he knows exactly which of the wain-men are the least valuable: ''Tis better to put off young Harding, for hee hath the least skill, and Gutteredg, for hee is most peremptory and Dogged.' Gutteredge was, however, taken on again, and is planting mulberry trees in the garden in 1664.

The Parson at Wasing is to be complained of to the Justices for having brought in an outsider. 'Take the overseers of the Poore with you,' writes Sir Ralph to Roades, 'and let them Tax the Parson at 5 shillings a weeke (over and above what hee should otherwise bee taxed to the Poore) & get the Justices to confirme theire Tax & then let it bee weekly levied by Distresse (if the Parson refuse to pay it) & let this five shillings a weeke be kept for raysing of a Stock to discharge the Parish of all charges that may happen to them, by reason of this Inmate or his Wife or Children. . . . For if the Parson will bring needless burthens on the Towne, the Towne shall make his Purse smart for it all the wayes they can.' Feb. 3, 1655

A tenant farmer had pleaded for more time to pay his rent, but when he was heavily in arrears he disappeared one summer morning with his stock. 'Collins cannot carry away 68 sheepe & 12 cowes soe as not to be found,' wrote Sir Ralph to his steward; 'for if he went away on Satterday he durst not drive them on Sunday; ask Mr. Busby if I may not send hue & cry after him & the cattle, for since he played the knave soe grossly, when hee was soe well used, make him an example; . . . never trust any tenant soe much hereafter; but let them all know, if they cleare not all arrears before the next halfe yeares day that shall follow, you will not trust June 18, 1653 them with theire cattle, but sell them at the best rates you can, for forbearing of Tenants, you see, tempts them to bee knaves.'

Nov. 19, 1655 Sir Ralph writes to one of his own creditors, Richard Curtis: 'You shall have interest to a farthing, but when I call for Rent, my Tenants protest they cann make nothing either of their cheeze or cattle, & I know 'tis too true, & corne is also att so low a Rate, that I know not what wee shall doe.'

'Land goes off in most parts of England, soe neare London for 20 or at least for 19 yeares purchase,' wrote Sir Ralph concerning his own estate, Jan. 1654 'yet I would be content to take 18 years purchase for it, rather then pay interest still.'

Besides the small farmers and the labourers in regular work owning cows, there were a number of destitute people who were much on Sir Ralph's mind in his long lonely evenings abroad. At Christmas time 1648 he wrote: 'I am told that Claydon is poorer than ever, & that the poor want work.' He Mar. 1651 writes to Roades: 'About 2 yeares agon you writ me word, there was non at Claydon that asked almes at any man's Dore, either within the Towne or without. Tell me if there is any that doe it now and who they are; . . . also name how many receive weekly or monthly assistance from the Towne, & what the Towne allowes them.' He wrote a careful memorandum on 'How to relieve Claydon Poore' in January 1652; those 'which receive noe Almes, are perhapps,' he says, 'fitter objects of charity than the

Beggars.' He desires Roades to confer with their richer neighbours about the apportionment of labour, 'so that all men that can work, want work, and are without work, shall be given work according to theire abilities.' He helps the young people to start in life by paying apprentice fees or by finding them places; he is willing to pay for the board of a poor little village child whom no one will own; 'but then security must be taken to keepe it like a Christian.' He will give immediate help to the most destitute; 6*d.* a week to 'old Newman . . . & to Andrewes & his wife 3*d.* a weeke a peece, from mee towards their present subsistence'; but he longs to see something done for the aged poor more permanent and more business-like than this uncertain almsgiving. He desires Roades to think over a scheme which he might start at 'some considerable charge' if the Towne [village] would keep it going by a common rate of which he would bear his full share. His own plan would now be called a co-operative cow club; the cows are to be bought by subscription, and to remain the property of the club (the club at first being Sir Ralph), the men to pay for the cow-run and to have the produce of the cow, and taking more cows as they can afford it. He would introduce a good breed of cows at Claydon, as those belonging to the poor were 'old and naught. & dry many months in the yeare.'

But this scheme proved to be full of difficulties: we hear much of local jealousies, and the cows themselves did not rise equal to the occasion. Dec. 18, 1652 'Whereas I formerly desired to provide Cowes for the Poore of Claydon of which they might have the milke, W. R. thinks that noe fit way for them, for the poorest are old & cannot doe that businesse. Besides that very cow that was this yeare worth 5 pounds at May Day, was not worth above 50 shillings at Michelmas, which would bee a greate losse to me & but halfe a yeares profit to them. Therefore twere better to give the poorest of them that cannot labour a weekly portion of Bread & meate, & soe doe it to more or lesse as I see cause.' Two hundred faggots are to be divided at Christmas among John Lea, Widow Croton, Nan Heath, and Judye May.

Two pious tasks filled his mind on returning to his old home—to build almshouses for the poor and to erect a monument to the memory of his dead.

The Washingtons in the days of their prosperity at Sulgrave had set apart some cottages for the use of 'honest, aged, or impotent persons . . . without paying any rent therefore, other than one red rose at the feast of St. John Baptist yearly.' Sir Ralph exacted no such poetic rent, but he took care that the old men and women should have good gardens, and they were to be stocked with fruit trees from the 'Setts' in his own orchard. The elm-tree walk which Sir Ralph planned for the inmates has disappeared: the high road now runs close up to the cottage doors; the only compensation that the civilisation of the nineteenth century has provided for the old people who have lost their green alley is a red letter-box in the opposite wall.[1]

The monument had been in Sir Ralph's thoughts ever since his wife's death : even before her body could reach Claydon he had written to Dr. Denton about it. 'Measure the Breadth of y^e^ chancell & marke the place where y^e^ Body lies, and at your returne describe it to a Toombemaker & send me 2 or 3 draughts on paper drawne Black & White, or in Colours as it will bee, that I may see which Toombe I like best ; & because my deare Mother & halfe my children are there, They and if you thinke fit my selfe, & 2 Boyes (not forgetting poore Pegg that went to Heaven from Hence) may bee added also, & Aug. 25, 1650 if my Father could well bee brought in it would bee very well. As for ye price, if the designe please me, wee shall not easily differ for a little money. Set ye price uppon every draught. Black & white Marble, or all Black, or all White Marble I thinke is better than coloured Marbles. Tell mee what is best to bee donn. I meane whether to have soe many in the Tombe, or only a single statue of her alone whose memory is soe precious unto mee, that I desire to consecrate it to posterity by all immaginable waies & meanes within my power.'

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[1] Sir Ralph's memorandum is as follows :—

'THE ALMESHOUSE.

'Every Roome is 15 Foot long, and 13 Foote broad within.

'And 8 Foote high from y^{e} Floore to the Wallplate, and from yt to the side peece, tis sloped and plastered lik y^{e} Roofe of a garret.

'The Chimney is 4 Foote broad, & 4 Foote high within and placed right in y^{e} Middle of y^{e} Roome, between the streete Door and y^{e} Garden doore, which doors are 2 foote 2 inches broad & five foote & halfe high.

'The Window is 2 paines of Glasse (without a casement), each paine being 2 Foote and halfe high and 15 inches broad.

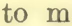
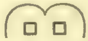
'The garden is as broad as theire House, & 40 Foot long, with a privy at the end, & the side separations, and Lathes 4 Foote high.

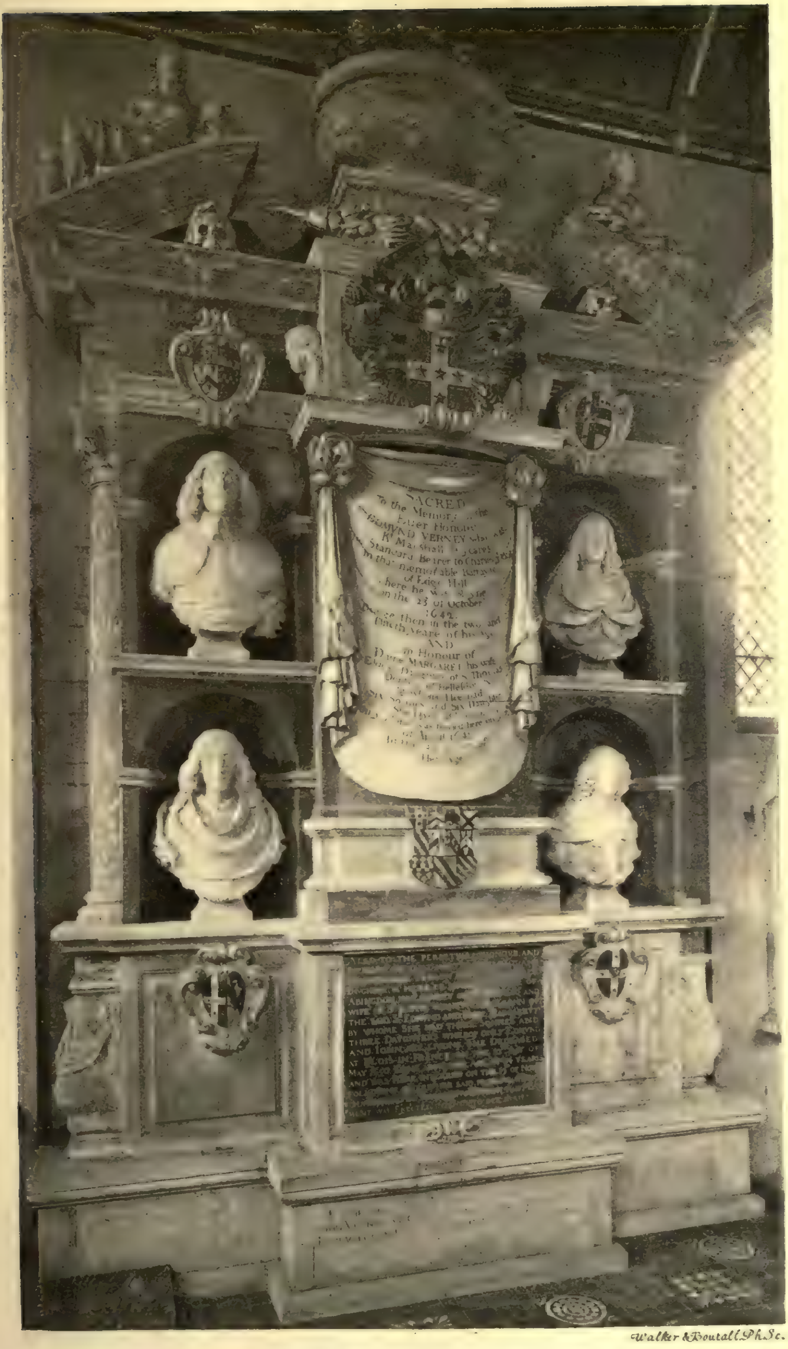
'One pumpe in y^{e} ally before the dore serves all.

'The Walke without the Wall is rayled in, & full 5 Foote broad, & a Row of Elmes planted in it.

'The Wall is 2 Bricks thick from y^{e} ground to the Water Table, and from thence to the Wall plate 1 Brick & halfe Thick.

'The Peeces of Timber that goe through the chimnies from Wall plate to Wallplate are about 4 inches thick, and 6 inches Broad.'

Monsieur Duval is lodging 'in one of the best stonecutter's houses in London,' and he superintends the work under Dr. Denton. 'Now for a Tombe, Sept. 23, 1651 ye chancell being little,' Sir Ralph writes, 'I was thinking to make an Arch like this  of Touch [Black Granite] or Black Marble; within the whole Arch shall bee black, & her statue in White Marble in a Winding sheet with her hands lift upp set uppon an Urne or Pedestall uppon which or on ye edge of ye Arch may bee what Armes or Inscriptions shall bee thought fit. I was thinking to make a double Arch like this  and in it to set upp her statue, & only leave a Pedestall for mine, for my sonn to set upp, if hee thinke fit, but I doubt this would bee thought vanity, being there is non for my Father & Mother, but if it please god to give me life & my estate, I will set up a tombe for them. I know Mr. Write about Charing crosse did make one in this manner, with a greate Childe of White Marble


SACRED
to the Memory of the
Euer Honour
EDMVND VERNEY
Kt Marshall
Standard Bearer to Charles
in that memorable Battayle
of Edge Hill
where he was slayne
on the 23 of October
1642.
AND
in Honour of
Dame MARGARET his wife

Walker & Boutall Ph. Sc.

Monument erected by Sir Ralph Verney in Middle Claydon Church.

between the 2 stones of Touch, & all armes & Inscriptions & the Drapery of the 2 marble statues very well & artificially cut; hee had 80*l.* for it, but then he carried it 80 or 100 miles, & set it upp there at his charge; others have had it donn for 50*l.*, but perhaps not so well cut. . . . See D^r Dunns & the other Tombes at Paul's or Westminster or elsewhere before you speake with the Workmen.'

It is appalling to think what the monument might have been if Dean Donne's tomb in St. Paul's had been taken as a model. Before his death, in 1631, Donne dressed himself in his graveclothes, and sat for his own effigy, which looked like a great white owl with folded wings and a very reverend expression, perched upon a funeral urn.

Sketches come to him from London and are revised at Rome; others are sent from Rome, where the busts were probably executed. 'The man that should draw the designe of the Tombe is so imployed by the Pope's Officers about Shewes for Easter' that Sir Ralph's order is laid aside; the decorative part of the work is to have no 'figures of Men, Birds or beasts.' 'Black & Coloured marble cost 10*s.* the foot, white marble costs 16*s.* & alabaster 7*s.* the foot,' brought in Dutch ships. March 8, 1652

The monument after all the time and thought bestowed on it, is worthy of Sir Ralph's good taste and of the memories it was destined to enshrine. Sir Roger complains. 'My hopes of seeing you at the D^tors were dasht; its your pleasure to live still amongst the tombes, and to keep company with ghosts. I pray be no longer intomb'd, least I prove interr'd before you come.' While Sir Ralph is absent Henry writes: 'My cousen Smith, Lady Haile and cousen Hobart have sent for mee, to meet them instantly at Claydon, to showe my Lady the house and tombe; noe dinner do they gett.'

In August 1653 Sir Ralph is sending a hospitable invitation to sister Gardiner and her husband. 'Hee & all his House shall be most welcome heather, though not so finely fed as I was lately at Preshaw.' His 2 horses go to meet them. 'I wish they could carry Trebble, that your coach might bee lesse charged; however I hope you will order matters soe as not to leave a Hoofe behinde. The Honest Farmourer will guard the House sufficiently doe not doubt it. In earnest, the more you bring, the sooner you come, & the longer you stay, the greater will the obligation bee to, Deare sister, your most affectionate Brother & Servant.'

He also invites brother and sister Elmes; the former replies: 'your sister & myself do live so unlovingly together that I have no heart to come to her freindes: neither do I like to have my freindes come to mee, least they should take notice of her unkindnesse to mee.' The fault was not all on one side. Lady Elmes' housekeeping was carried on under difficulties; her husband would sometimes leave home suddenly: 'He is now gone a way & hathe not left me one peny what ocasion sum ever I shoulde have for any.' Their latest quarrel was about a maid-servant that Lady Elmes wished to engage, and to whom he objected; but she could give him a home-thrust in return: 'she seated herself at the lower end of the table, & that before company, saying it was fitt for him that was mistress to sitt at the upper end'; a retort which seems to have mortified her lord and master beyond measure. The 'company' were all on Lady Elmes' side, and Sir Thomas (like Ahasuerus' courtiers) was left clamouring for a law which should enable every man to bear rule in his own house.

Edward Fust, of Hill in Gloucestershire, and his wife Bridget Denton, were also invited. The Fusts were strong Royalists, and Edward was made a baronet in 1662 by Charles II. 'for his fidelity to the house of Stuart in its extremity.' They were a very attached couple, and their youngest daughter, Peg, was one of Sir Ralph's special friends. Sir Ralph's aunt was stricken with fever. 'Our harpes are uppone the willowes,' wrote her husband; 'yett all joye & happiness attend you; & that Quire of good companie now with you, one of which I was ambitious to have been.' Dr. Denton and his wife Kate were expected, and her daughter and the good apothecary. 'Present my service to Mrs. Gape,' wrote Sir Ralph, 'and charge her on my Blessing to come downe quickly & bring her Willie heather.' Captain and Mrs. Sherard were invited, but were occupied with building. Sir Roger Burgoyne came, and other old friends.

The unlettered cook did admirably, and the guests were loud in their praise of the 'good feeding,' but he had some 'gamesome trickes' which displeased the sober Claydon household. When Sir Ralph went into lodgings in town in December he lent him to Captain Sherard; a boon Aunt Sherard received with mixed feelings. It was delightful to think that her husband would be so well fed, but she feared that the 'chef' might prove too lavish in his expenditure, and 'over-bold with the maides,' which would 'be a great hart griefe to me.' Fish-pies were amongst the works of art produced by Sir Ralph's cook, and sent to friends in London. Dr. Denton did not remember that ever he tasted any such, except eel and lamprey. Sir Ralph had them made of carp: they were not at first successful; one arrived 'tainted.' 'Mine,' wrote Dr. Denton, 'was very good, but soe full of small bones, that none of us durst touch it, only to taste it.' His widowed sister, Mrs. Abercromby, now in very straitened circumstances, was at supper with them, and upon her commendations of it, the Doctor hastily presented her with the remains of the pie to take home with her. 'Moll will indite you,' he wrote to Sir Ralph, 'for contriving to choake her.' The pigeon pies were said to be little better; 'the bones of the legs were broken,' but Sir Ralph's cook persevered, and the Doctor sends a message from Nancy on the receipt of another basket from Claydon:

'Madcap is soe well as to tell you & brags much of it, that she hath jeer'd you into good pidgeon pies. These were soe good that there is not one left of them already.' Nov. 1655

Mary's luggage kept arriving from Blois, which must have saddened her husband; there were trunks to be unpacked marked 'M. V.' in brass nails, containing odds and ends of women's goods: 'fringes, cordes of stooles, cushions and such like,' and the guitar that Sir Ralph had so loved to hear her play. The boxes had gone through many perilous adventures, owing to 'the pyrates and other sea robbers' in the Channel, and 'the porters and such starvling fellowes that steal at the Custom houses, where there are as many filchers as searchers.' The delays were infinite in getting them from London to Claydon. Sir Ralph's agent in town had arranged with the carrier to take them, but though the goods were brought two hours before the time appointed, the waggon was full, and they had to be warehoused again.

The carrier might well have been alarmed at the bulk and number of the packages: besides the 'long elme cases of linnan,' the 'square Box of Drawers,' the 'great iron bounde Trunkes,' the 'yalowe haire sumpter trunkes,' the 'presse for napkings,' the 'Cabanet in a case,' there were 'great Bundels' past telling of bedding, carpets and hangings, 'hampers of glasses, potts, and trumpory,' and a 'Bundel' of the unfortunate picture frames that had already been so knocked about the world. The Vandykes themselves were still waiting, rolled up at Rouen, for a safe means of sending them home. Inside the 'glasses and trumpery' Luce Sheppard packed 'two pound of bisquet, a dozin of oringes, and summe liquerish.' The luggage sent by carrier often came to grief by the way. Dr. Denton was reproached for despatching a box to Claydon without sufficient care. 'The D^{r},' he replies, 'is out of tune, maugre jeers & flouts, for he did not only tye the black box with its owne stronge leather, but alsoe coarded it with a packthread, as porters use to coard a trunke.'

Mr. Page, a correspondent at Zante, sent Sir Ralph 'Pier pointes curious case of Roman perspective glasses,' but they were sunk by a Dutch man-of-war. Mr. Page himself is removing to a 'remote part of the world, called Peloponesus,' where he is made Consul in 1655; but after some delay he sends the glasses from Venice: their freight by sea costs three pounds ten shillings.

Sir Ralph seems to be employing Cromwell's upholsterer; for Robert Lloyd writes: 'I went to Mr. Conway to desier him to come to Cleydon, but his answer was that hee was very sorry that hee could not come to you according to his promise, for the Lord Protector had sent him an order on friday night last for to provide the lodinge at Whitehall, and to gett all thinges in a redinesse for hee would come there within a fortnight, soe that M^{r} Conway

Jan. 16, 1654

can not by noe means sturr out of Towne untill hee is setteled.'

Sir Ralph is planting his park and orchard. 'Cherry stocks will be two shillings by the hundred, gathered out of the woods: but any better and biger ones from the gardens will be from three pens to twelfe pens a pece. The holly setts price are eighten pens the hundred . . . the holly beris are not cald for as yet.' John Hanbury, of Preston Court, sends him grafts of good apples for cider. '30 or 40 couple of Does [rabbits] are to be turned out to feed in the orchard, and the grass must be mown if it be too sour and long for them.' Cousin Gee is inquiring about lime trees in Flanders, where 'they doe abound almost everywhere, especially about Lisle, where they are to bee had of what size you please for a very small matter,' and Mr. Wakefield offers to import for him 800 abeles, which he says will be much better than 'the Lindeboomes.' Many old abeles still flourish at Claydon. Feb. 10, 1654

A nursery of young trees is started 'in the Kodling Knoll in the Garden,' whose seeds are to be carefully saved 'and writt upon severally.' While Sir Ralph is in London these young trees are much on his mind. All the 'Ewes' and ashes are to be staked. He will have some Alders set in the wet places of the woods for a trial. In July the new trees are to be constantly watered, 'especially the firre trees & Lime trees in the Garden, and those in the whitening yard, and lett a Loade of water be carryed to the Wallnutt trees in Barley yard.' Michaud, who has no scope for his confectionery talents, while Sir Ralph is absent, may help to carry water.

In a country without stone, brick making is one of the most important outdoor industries at Claydon. Feb. 1658 The brickyard is to be trenched and the brickmakers will come as soon as the weather permits, there April 1658 is a list of the tools, wheelbarrow, and moulds 'delivered to the Brickmen.' Sir Ralph is getting 'Brik pavements' from a neighbouring village; Aug. 1655 they are 9 inches square, and he inquires whether if he 'take soe great a quantity as 12 or 15 hundred together . . . six oxen would not well draw 500 at a loade, for they are not near twice so heavy as brick, and any ordinary cart will bring 5 or six hundred of brick at a loade, now the wayes are good.'

In 1656 the brickmaker is paid six shillings a thousand for making and burning bricks, one shilling a quarter for burning lime, and five shillings a hundred for making and burning 'pavements.' Stone-gatherers should be set to work on some of the fields. Sir Ralph 'would expect to get some fields measured and plotted for a penny the acre, if the ditches were perfected.'

The disputes between the Parson and Squire were not yet at an end. Mr. Aris had ever-recurring difficulties about his tithes. The Council of State recommended in 1649 that they should be valued throughout England 'in order to take them away and settle in their room some means for the preachers of the Gospel.' The matter was under frequent discussion in Barebones' Parliament, but that 'other competent provision' for the clergy not having been discovered, Cromwell himself declared that while this was the case he should consider himself very treacherous if he deprived them of their present maintenance.'[1]

There was also a thorny question at Claydon concerning the limits of the glebe, and of an exchange, which it passed the wit of man to bring to a conclusion. In this dilemma Mrs. Aris held out a private olive branch, and Sir Ralph at her suggestion wrote to the Rev. Edward Butterfield, Rector of Preston-Bissett:—

Oct. 2, 1654

'This morning M^rs Aris was more kinde to mee then ever she was in her life; and declares her greate aversenesse to any contest between her husband and my selfe, and when wee had discoursed at Large about the businesse, shee (in a very friendly way) propounded that you might come over, & use your good endeavours to end the controversie, well knowing that both her husband, and I, have a very greate confidence in your friendshipp to us both. But M^r Aris not knowing anything of this, you must carry it soe, as if you came only to visit him, . . . wee shall desire you to come too morrow if you can, and somewhat early too, that wee be not straitened in point of time. God give a good success to your undertaking.' Mr. Butterfield replied that he would come betimes, and should think his pains well bestowed if he might 'prove instrumentall to settle an everlasting peace' between Sir Ralph and Parson Aris.

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[1] Inderwick's *Interregnum*, pp. 50, 51.

The treaty of 'everlasting peace' was not to be drawn up in a day, though Mr. Butterfield did come early; and three weeks later he writes again to Sir Ralph in a tone of some discouragement:—

'On Wednesday (though I had designed that day for other occasions) I shall with God's leave wait on you, and contribute my best endeavours, to finish the agreement betwixt your selfe and M^r Aris. Sir you well know it is for the most part a very thankles office, this way of mediation. I should be very unwilling to loose my friends for my paines. I shall be careful not to deserve it, but if it be my fate I must beare it.' So well and warily, however, did Mr. Butterfield walk upon egg-shells that when, in three short years, the militant Rector with his rights and his wrongs was buried in Middle Claydon Churchyard, his widow bestowed her hand, and Sir Ralph the living, upon this admirable mediator.

While Sir Ralph was imprisoned for many months in 1655, and Parson and Steward girded at each other again with all their wonted zeal in his absence, the Parson led the attack. With a shaky hand, and in very pale ink, he wrote to Sir Ralph a folio sheet of provocations offered him by the Steward, and sins of omission such as were once happily defined by a child as 'the sins a man ought to have committed but didn't.' Roades, however, had managed, in the Parson's estimation, to commit them all. In the head and front of his offending was the question of some omitted hurdles at Roger Deeley's gate. Sir Ralph had sent minute and special directions about the fencing in of Roger Deeley's Lane. The hurdles, Roades affirmed, were troublesome to fix, the 'Land being so unequal with ridges and furrows, that if the rails were even at the Topp any sheepe will creepe under them in the Furrowes.' Eight carpenters were to be set to work to make posts and rails 'to divide betwixt me and the Parson.'

Roades had given his master to understand that the hurdles were actually in their places; but the summer was far spent, and the Parson's beans were still exposed to the encroachments of horned cattle. Sir Ralph reproached his steward with considerable asperity, writing every word in large letters, when he approached Roger Deeley's gate, and discounting all possible excuses beforehand.

'I know you will say . . . that the hurt of your Legg, the building of your House, and the time of Harvest kept you longer from thence then you intended, this may bee some kinde of a lame excuse. . . . I will not condemn you unheard, tis not my custome . . . I cannot yet foresee how you can possibly excuse it . . . and I shall be noe lesse sorry then ashamed to have the world see my commands soe slighted by my own servant.' How the Steward must have loved the Parson by the time he had read through the long list of offences alleged against him! Altogether Roades had a lively time of it. Everybody at Claydon heard of Sir Ralph's displeasure, and the housekeeper was told that, as there could not be much to do indoors, she had better go up to the lane and report about the hurdles. The scolding given to the Steward had conciliated the Parson; but as Will Roades' brother Ralph, the Parish Clerk, farmed land close to the glebe, fresh occasions of offence could not fail to arise. In such topsy-turvy times it was possible that the Clerk might dismiss the Rector; at least so it seemed to poor harassed Mr. Aris; and if the principles of the new democracy permitted the Clerk's hogs to eat up the Rector's corn, it was high time indeed for the beneficed clergy to depart to a better world.

Sep. 15, 1655

'Sir,' wrote Mr. Aris to Sir Ralph, 'the tenant that excused his hoggs for coming into my corne . . . was Raph Roades, he speake to me myself and threatened to shoote my dog, or knock him on the head because he Luggd his hoggs. And though I suffered the wronge, yet the gentleman uppon some parle betweene him and me, turned me away, and forsooth would be no longer clearke, but presently delivered up his office to the churchwarden. And if he be not belyed he threatened me as well as my dog. I told his brother what mischief he might bring.' The hogs had got through the neglected gaps in Roger Deeley's Lane. 'He seemed to me to condemne Raph, but the Lane was not heeded, as if he had rather it should make quarrels still, then he would be at the least trouble to prevent them . . . so prayinge for your . . . saife returne thither (where there is need enough of your presence, and your true freindes indeede long to see you), I humbly take my leave & shall remain, Sir, your Servant to be commanded, JOHN ARIS.

'Sir, if you would rather ditch me in then rayle, because the rayles they say are most chargeable tis indifferent to me, so there be a dead hedge presently made and a ditch throwne up this winter. But I hope to see you suddenly with us, and then I know you will order all things as they should bee.'

He adds a second still more placable postscript, having just heard that 'there are now 5 carpenters about the posts and rayles, and that one made up Deeley's Lane on Satterday in the afternoon.'

So the Steward had carried out at last the Squire's peremptory commands, the Parson was contented, and peace was restored to Claydon for a season.

CHAPTER V.

TOM, THE IMPORTUNATE DEBTOR.

1649–1663.

> 'They say he borrows money in God's name; the which he hath used so long and never paid, that now men grow hard-hearted, and will lend nothing for God's sake. Pray you examine him upon that point.'
>
> *Much Ado About Nothing.*

'To imitate historians in putting prefaces to their books, I conceive I need not, for I am confident you are so very sencible of my want of clothing. Sir my last request to you is for a slight stuff sute & coat against Whitsontide, which may stand you in 50*s.*, the which I will repay you by 3*s.* weekly till you be reimburst. In former times my own word would have passed for such a summ, but now they require securitie of mee, becaus I live in soe cloudy a condition. God put it into your hart once to releive my nakedness & you shall find a most oblidgeing brother of Sir, your humble servant THOMAS VERNEY.'

So runs one of the frequent begging letters addressed by Tom to his long-suffering brother. 'Faithful Abraham,' and 'righteous Job,' St. James and St. John, are all pressed into the service to teach Sir

Ralph the duty of almsgiving; when this well-spring of charity threatens to run dry, other members of the family are put under contribution. 'I have sent to my hard-harted Aunt, only for two bottles of her table-beare . . . it is my greatest refreshment, soe it be fresh & brisk'; Uncle Doctor is encouraged to send Tom those expensive luxuries 'a few oranges or lemons' if he is indisposed, or at the least 'some cooleing barley broth.' This is a list of his modest requests when meditating a West Indian journey:—

'First for a provision for my soul—

'Doctor Taylour his holy liveing & holy dyeing both in one volume. 2^{ly} the Practise of Piety to refresh my memery. The Turkish Historye, the reading whereof, I take some delight in.

'Now for my body.' A list follows of provisions of all kinds, Westphalian hams, Cheshire cheeses, Zante oil, beef suet, everything to be 'of the very best quality.' He will not ask for 'burnt clarett or brandy,' though he requires it, 'for I must not, Sir, overcharge you, for you have been highly civill to me'!

Liar and braggart as he was, Tom's personal courage had never been doubted, and if his ill success in Virginia and 'the Barbadoes' had shown his lack of aptitude as a colonist, he might still have earned his bread honourably as a soldier; but 'having flown over many knavish professions, he settled only in rogue.'

His younger brother Henry, with his cynical lack of high aims and worthy occupation, at least behaved like a gentleman in the ordinary affairs of life; he prided himself upon the good society he kept, and continued to be Penelope's favourite brother till death. But in that large family of brothers and sisters Tom had not one chum. He alienated the love of his first wife and disgracefully neglected the second. From being idle and extravagant, he had become, at the time we have now reached, actually dishonourable and dishonest, and sadly but firmly the doors of the old home were at length shut against him. If he visited Claydon at all, it was by private appointment with the Steward, for Roades as long as he lived could only behave kindly to the son of his old master. The informer and forger might not claim the familiar intercourse of a brother, though Ralph still continued to supply his material needs.

Plausible and quick-witted, with an ever-green hopefulness that would have been admirable had it led to better things; born of a Puritan family in an anxious and conscientious age, Tom stands out as a man absolutely without either cares or scruples. While the ship of the State is labouring in stormy waters, and men are struggling in agony to bring her into port, Tom follows her course with the keen and hungry eye of a sea-gull, indifferent to her fate, but ready to swoop down upon any scraps thrown overboard.

His share of the family correspondence lays us, however, under a deep debt of gratitude; he depicts social conditions to which the admirable Sir Ralph must ever have been a stranger. We learn something of the shifts and tricks to which a debtor was driven, and are forced to admire the cultivated and ingenious letters the wretch can write in the most unsavoury surroundings, hunted down by creditors and racked with fever and ague. To give the scapegrace his due, he was not habitually addicted to coarse self-indulgence. With the over-eating and drinking and low vice prevalent after the Restoration, most of Tom's nephews and cousins were old men at five-and-forty; and it speaks much for the general sobriety of his habits that he continued hale and hearty to his ninety-fourth year, surviving all his generation. Rogue as he is, his very audacity compels us to attend to him, and (as has been said of the popularity of the cuckoo) 'the world has always a fondness for interesting scamps.'

In the fateful year 1649 Tom Verney crosses the path of John Lilburne, and the fierce blaze of the Leveller's invective sheds a flood of light upon passages in Tom's life, but dimly known to us through the Verney letters.

Of all the self-opiniated Englishmen of that strong age, Lilburne was surely the most impossible to fit into any scheme of government or of society. Flogged and starved by the Star Chamber, he had hardly done rejoicing over the downfall of that tyranny, before he was anxious to impeach Cromwell and Ireton of high treason ; and as to Haslerigg, who shared his own republican views, he had become in Lilburne's eyes 'a Polecat, a Fox, and a Wolf, who more justly deserved to die than ever the Earl of Strafford did.' Lilburne was at this time in prison, as usual, and, according to his own account, Haslerigg and Bradshaw were employing 'one Thomas Verney, a quondam Cavalier . . . to plot and contrive the taking away of his life' by getting him to write down something that might be used against him.[1] This is Tom's first letter with Lilburne's comments printed in italics : 'For my esteemed good friend Colonel John Lilburne, at his Chamber in the Tower these present.

May 8, 1649.

'Sir,—Since my arrivall in England I have endeavoured to finde out the severall constitutions and dispositions of men, and I perceive the major part of those I have discoursed withall, are led more by their own fancies then reason; I am very much troubled to see how strangely things are carried, finding the Subject not at all eased or freed from oppression : I pray informe me in any one particular thing, wherein England hath received any benefit since the warre began ? Oh this is a blessed reformation ! Those Books of yours which I have lately seen doth handsomely lash them ; I am joyfull to hear that we have some true English-men left that will stand for our Liberties and just Rights. My earnest desire is . . . to joyne with you and your friends, and to steer my course by your compasse, and . . . further your designe in any thing, though it be with the hazard of my life, which I would willingly sacrifice for my Countries Liberty . . . I make my addresses to your selfe, imagining you to be the chiefest of those (who are in a scornfull way by your and the Commonwealths Enemies) branded with the name of Levellers. I never yet regarded much the malice of my enemies: I beleeve the like in you; therefore I am the more incouraged to joyne with such: Excuse I beseech you my liberall and true hearted expressions by way of writing. [*And yet a greater Judasly villaine, never breathed upon the earth.*] It is a custome that I am used to, & cannot on a sudden leave it. I accidentally heard of some that were employed in the Country to act for you, were taken and carried Prisoners to Oxford by some of Colonel Scroopes Regiment. [*Its a common saying a treacherous lier had need of a good memory which Verney wants; for at this time Scroops Regiment was at Salisbury in Rebellion against their Generall and Officers.*] If it should be so, you must be the more cawtious hereafter, otherwise you will wilfully give up your lives as a prey to your enemies. I cannot as yet say we, because I know not as yet whether I shall be received as a friend amongst you or no. I can assure you my friendship shall very much advance you businesse, for I shall engage many friends in Buckinghamshire (it being my Native Country) with me, I am confident to gayne the strongest party in that Country in spight of Fate. And as for Oxfordshire, Barkeshire, and some part in Hertfordshire, I can (by reason of my many friends) ingage a considerable party in all those Countries, and prevail with others (that love to sleep in a whole skinne) to be as Neuters. This I beeleeve deserves thankes: But I can further advance your businesse in a more considerable way, if I finde . . . that you have Gentlemen that are well beloved and well esteemed in their Countryes, that can on a sudden (as I shall do) bring three or four thousand men into the field to back him that should doe you service. If you can do so I shall make another provision to you, which is to gaine the City of Oxford for you, which you may conceive will be very difficult to do, and many more that do not know me. But by my means I shall worke with my friends within the Towne as well as those without, I am almost confident of gaining it: Then shall we be in a condition to furnish our selves with Armes, and have a place of retreat upon any occasion. . . . I dare not come to the Tower lest there should be notice taken of me. [*And yet at the same time had Bradshaws and Frosts Commission to write this Letter, O pure Rogue!*] All the acquaintance that ever I had with you, was in the Tower, where I had the happiness three or foure times to bee in your company, in my honored friend Sir John Maynard his Chamber. I know not whether you may call me to mind or no, but really you will finde a most trusty secret and a most obliging friend and servant of THO. VERNEY.'

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[1] From John Lilburne's *An Hue & Cry after Sir Arthur Haslerig*, in the form of a letter to his uncle George Lilburne, August 18, 1649.

Such magnificent offers from a stranger excited Lilburne's suspicions. He was asked if ink and paper were kept from him, and his speech were free, to instruct some friend to treat with Tom by word of mouth on his behalf; or to give him a list of his adherents in Bucks. Tom pretended to have heard from a friend of Lilburne's, who was to meet him at the George Inn, Aylesbury, 'one Mister William Parkins,' wholly a creation of Tom's fertile brain. Lilburne consented to see Tom at last, taking with him two of his fellow-prisoners as witnesses, who feared lest Tom might try 'to stab or poyson him in a cup of wine, or the like.' They did not know their man. Tom bragged a good deal of his own services to the King's party 'five years ago,' and 'that his Father was slain at Edgehill, being the King's Standard-Bearer,' and protested that he abhorred the very idea of being a 'Derby House agent.' Lilburne told him that he was 'a juggling knave,' and repeated some of the choice stories he had heard about him 'from a citizen of London, a Colonel, & a Gentleman Cavalier.' 'At which,' Lilburne says, 'the gentleman (with the impudentest face and undaunted countenance that I have seen) denied all.'

Lilburne did his very best to pay Tom out; he desired that the matter should be brought to 'the

Committee of State,' and sent copies of the letters to 'Master Hunt of Whitehall,' which if they had expressed Tom's genuine sentiments were certainly sufficient to hang him. 'And yet,' as Lilburne says bitterly in summing up the whole story, 'the said VERNEY continues as great with Bradshaw and others at the thing called the COUNCEL OF STATE to this very day, as if he were their ALPHA and OMEGA.'

There were obscure reports on the other hand that Tom had tried to sell himself to Charles II., and had been obliged very hastily to leave the Hague. August 13, 1649. The gossip-loving newspaper 'Mercurius Eleuticus' has a wild story that, having stolen a horse in France, Tom took refuge in a monastery, 'where, for some small time, he dissembled himself a zealous Catholique, and, as the sonne to so honourable a gentleman as Sir Edmond Varney, had great respect and favour shewed him untill hee found an opportunitie to steale away sundry priests' vestments, pictures, and other things consecrated to a holy use and of great value, wherewith he fled to Calais, and there sacrilegiously sold them.'

August 15 1650 'Dear Ralph,' writes Dr. Denton the next year, 'I heare Tom is designing to have his Eldest Brother sequestred, I have a wolfe by the eares of him. I have done w^t I can to find out his aime. Ursula in much kindnes to Raph told me of it who is now one of her White boyes, he that would sweare Browne to be alive in '48, that was dead in '42, will not scuple to sweare his Brother a turke and noe X'stian ; . . . he is of the Spaniell kind, the more he is beaten the more he fawnes and per contra.' Sir Ralph writes in the summer of 1650 : 'Tom is still in Prison, and threatens my sister to swear agst her if she keepe him there, God in mercy mend him. I thinke there was never such a creature Borne.'[1]

He was so cordially disliked that the marriages and births carefully registered in each branch of the family have not been recorded in his case, except for a scornful entry that he had many wives and left no children. It is therefore difficult to disentangle his domestic history. In 1644 we heard of him with an affectionate wife, Joyce (family unknown), a woman of good fortune and position; perhaps her parents, who were Royalists, had left England in the troubles, for Tom airily alludes to 'a wife that I have at Mallaga.' Sir Ralph was afraid of meeting her abroad : 'Tell me how Tom is, and in what Towne in Italy his Wife is, for I neither desire to visit her nor to bee visited by her. I doe not beeleive shee is dead, tell me if he spake of it, before hee went a wooing to another.' Tom declared that he had too much trouble with one wife to undertake a second; but there were also rumours of a forgery, which made his brother very uncomfortable. Tom wrote without any embarrassment to Will Roades that he had failed to get rid of a creditor, 'Whereupon I feigned a letter to him as commeing from you, and that pretended letter of yours contained this—to have mee signe and seal with him; therefore I pray accommodate him the sayd summ of twenty or thirty pound, and in case I refuse (att his commeing doune into the countrey) to signe and seal, I will then pay you double the summ he takes of you.'

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[1] In 1650 the case of the creditors on the estate of James, Duke of Hamilton, came before the Committee for compounding. There was a question as to the date of the Duke's delinquency, and consequently as to the validity of assignments of property made by him before he openly took up arms against the Parliament. The following entries appear in the Calendar of the Committee (pp. 24, 25, 26), Nov. 29, 1650 : 'Deposition made by Thos. Verney that the Duke came to Oxford of his own accord in Dec. 1643 with propositions from the Scotchmen, and was there a week without guard before he was secured, July 17, 1651. Exception against the testimony of Thos. Verney, that he had 50*l.* given him by the creditors and a suit of clothes to give his evidence.' [I am indebted for this reference to the kindness of C. H. Firth, Esq.]

Dr. Denton did his best for Tom, but refused to intercede for him with Sir Ralph, till he had given up a certain forged deed. Feb. 20, 1652 He replied: 'I shall not now stand to capitulate; becaus I know my self, in some measure, faultie, and I beleeve you have (for my father's sake) a greater care of my reputation then I can possibly have for myself: yet this much I cannot omitt telling you, which is, That if my ugly prank (I give it your one phrase) had taken effect, I had left my country with it.'

Dec. 1652 Sir Ralph writes to the Doctor: 'Tom will raile, and stopping his annuity will not mend him; for when he was lowsy, sick, and naked, your care and goodnesse to helpe him out of that Misery made noe alteration in him.' Tom had been released from the

Fleet in May 1652, but he found his way there again in a few months' time.

When Sir Ralph returned to England he received from Tom a long and ceremonious letter of welcome :

'These

'To the hands of my highly esteemed Brother

'S^r RAPHE VERNEY

'present.

'Deare Brother. . . . The nois of your landing affoarded mee more joy and comfort then a wife can receive att the report of her deare husband his arriveall from the Indies, after seven yeares voyage ; and there reception cannot be with a more ardent zeal expressed each to other, then mine should be to you, were it not for the reasons which (long before this) my uncle hath imparted to you. An error (I must confess) I have committed, which hath been a blemish to the noble and honest familie I descended from. . . . How much I am a sufferer by it, God and I best know ; and you may imagine since I have not a peny but what you know of. I thought not (good brother) for the present to have insisted upon this perticuler : but to have stayed a day or two longer ; in regard this is the first I have presented you with since your commeing to London. . . . The last summer I should have gone to see a wife att Mallaga, had it not been for the prison keeper, but (a million million of thanks to you, for the same). . . . Noe lock nor key can now hinder mee : nothing but money is wanteing. My greatest stock is now come to one Jan. 31, 1653 poore groat . . . and how I am able to subsist 5 months with one groat . . . I appeal to you and to all rationeall and judicious persons.'

Tom had his own reasons for wishing to be off quickly. He was deeply in debt to the landlady of his lodgings, and when she took to calling on Sir Ralph, Tom was sensible that she 'was an eyesore to him,' and she fared no better with Dr. Denton. The woman 'had resented his conduct very ill,' he writes piteously to his uncle. Jan. 3, 1653 'Feareing that I should play the knave with her, shee (not withstanding my then weakness, betrayed me into the prison of the fleet, and I was brought thither by 8 of the clock the last night; which I feare will be a meanes to putt mee into a second relapse; for I was forced to walk in the yard all night, haveing neither fire, money, but one poore groat, nor roome to shelter mee in from the coldness and rawness of the night.' 'The grave of the Living' the Fleet was called, 'where they are shut up from the World, the Worms that gnaw upon them, their own Thoughts, the Jaylor and their Creditors.' Tom, little fastidious as he was, could not face the horrors of the common wards and those 'great rates the Gaoler exacts.'

Sir Ralph lost no time in getting him a private room (the lowest price being about 8*s.* a week, besides extra fees), wretched as it was at the best, but his 'enlargement' was more difficult to compass. Feb. 7, 1653 Tom writes again: 'My confinement is soe very chargeable, my chamber soe extreame cold, my habitt soe thinn, that I did by letter make my desires knowne. . . . Good brother, here is now some cold snowie weather approaching, which incites mee to putt on warmer cloths. I must confess I am moved for a coat of shagg'd bayes [baize], but you are suspitious my cloak would be then pawned. Hunger will break through strong walls, and I shall be soe plaine with you, as to let you know that rather then I should starve, cloak, coat, and all that I had should goe to relieve nature : But thanks be to God your charitie and brotherly affection hath soe amply appeared to mee that I have not knowne what hath belonged to want since teusday last.'

'You are that founetaine,' he wrote again two days later, 'from whence all my joy, delight, and comfort comes, and long may you live to see, what you principally aime att, my amendment. He goeth farr that never turnes. Wors livers then my self have seen their errors and have returned home like the prodigall : why may not I ? God hath endued mee with a reasoneable understanding ; and I question not a reall conversion, since I have soe courteous, soe kind, and so tender a harted brother to help mee up before I am quite downe. . . . In relation to my inlargment, I begg the continueance of a weekly supply dureing my restraint. Eighteene pence a day, which amounts in the week to 10*s*. 6*d*., is as low as any one that is borne a gentleman can possibly live att, let my wants be supplied by noon, that I may have a dinner as well as others.'

Tom was released before dinner-time, but then immediately rearrested. 'By this you have heard of my being retaken. I have been now ever since Sunday at night in prison, and have not come within a payer of sheets or a bed, or have had a fire or any meat to eat, but what I bought with my groat; and if this be not hard measure for one that hath been lately desperately sick, let the world judge. Truely I cannot conceive that my error committed, doth deserve soe severe and sharp a correction: I must submitt, if soe you have decreed, and if I perish I perish.' Feb. 11, 1653

Sir Ralph is exerting himself, and Tom writes again: 'Deare Brother,—Your pious (though unmerited) charitye ought to be registred in the chronicle of fame as a memoriall to future ages. Be confident, I shall not be spareing in exerciseing the office of an herauld to proclaime your worth. You may conceive mee a flatterer, but in truth I am not; for I am an enimye to all such sort of persons. . . . One thing more, I beseech you, take notice of: which is, that I must this night and soe for the future, lodge without sheets, if I pay them not two shillings: for I have layen in my foul ones a fortnight, and would, if I could possibly prevayle with the turnekey, who receives money for his sheets, keep them longer, but that civilitye I am denyed, as I am all others where now I am: therefore I must pay 2*s*. for a cleane payre; which I begg of you to send mee, and yet I cannot but blush for my mentioneing a thing soe inconsidereable, and of soe small a moment.' Feb. 14, 1653

The fees for beds were exorbitant; even those who provided their own 'paid fees for the privilege of lying upon them, without some one or more of their fellow-prisoners being told off to share the bed with them.'[1]

'Deare Brother,' he writes on his release, 'I conceive it, both in point of honour and gratitude, to be huge gentlemanlike to returne you a letter of thanks for what civill favours I received from you dureing my restraint, which, in truth, were many. I shall celebrate them particularly in my soul, whereby to be able to acknowledge them in the least presenting serviceable occasion, and live allwayes with this will, never to dye beholding to you, but yet my most truely esteemed Brother your most acknowledged thankfull servant, THO: VERNEY.' Cromwell had turned his attention to the miserable condition of debtors in the State prisons, and Tom seems to have profited by the milder laws to which they were subjected after this time; the old Fleet Prison, with which he was so familiar, perished in the Fire of London. March 8, 1653

There is another curious allusion to the Fleet in the Verney letters which may find a place here. The prisoner in this instance was an Irish peer, Lord Monson, one of the regicides.[2] As Lord

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[1] *The Œconomy of the Fleete*, edited by Aug. Jessop, D.D. Camden Society, 1879. Introduction, p. 88.

[2] The Fleet was quite prepared to entertain persons of quality. There was a table of fees ordered to be hung up in the hall which charged prisoners for their entrance, their accommodation, and their

Monson owned a deer park, and was in a position to ask high prices for his deer, it is difficult to understand what he was doing in prison; but a man who was kept in the Fleet under Cromwell and in the Tower under Charles II. must have had a perfect genius for getting into trouble. Cousin Winwood was anxious to buy his herd, and Sir Ralph writes to him: 'Because my uncle D^{r} had more acquaintance with Lord Munson then my selfe, yesterday I carried him to the Fleet; where at first my Lord, having almost forgot my Uncle, seemed somewhat shy, and carelesse of parting with his Deere, but as soone as hee caled him to minde, confessed clearly they cost him money, and yeelded him neither profit, nor pleasure, and was very inquisitive what his Friend would give (for you were never named), and at last told him, hee knew not what to aske, but intreated him . . . to get as much as hee could for a Poore Prisoner.' Dec. 28, 1688

Tom, in his 'huge gentlemanlike' manner, begs again, five days after his release, for means to leave the country. 'If I may be furnished with tenn shillings I will goe downe to Wapping and there take a lodging in a place where I am not knowne,

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discharge strictly according to 'their estate & degree.' In the highest scale were 'an Archbishop, a Duke, & a Duchess,' the second comprised 'a Marques, a Marquesse, an Earle, a Countesse, & a Viscountesse,' and so down by a 'Doctor of Divinitie or Lawe,' 'a gentleman or gentlewoman that shall sit at the Parlore Commons,' to the 'poore man of the wards that hath his part at the boxe,' who was dependent upon alms, from whom no entrance fee could be wrung, but who had to pay before he could be dismissed, though his debts might have been settled for him.—*The Œconomy of the Fleet*, p. 152.

and soe I can, by accompanieing my self with seamen, have dayly and hourely intelligence what shipps are bound either westward or southward, and learne both their burden and strenght, and what convoy, and allso when they will be ready and soe communicate unto your knowledge the truth of all things.'

He promised if he reached Malaga to send Sir Ralph 'the knowledge of my wive's and my greeting, together with the scitueation of the place, there manner of government, and with what else that I shall esteeme worthy your reading.' . . . But he has no special preference for Malaga. He next desires 'to be transported in a shipp that is bound for the Barbados. . . . Courteous Brother, That Island, and all the Indies over, doth wholly subsist by merchandizeing: and that person that aimes to live in creditt and repute in those parts must be under the notion of a merchant or factor, planter, or overseer of a plantation, and he that lives otherwise, is of little or noe esteeme. . . . I could (soe it might not occasion an offence) prescribe you a safe way how to send mee thither, like a gentleman, like your brother, and allso to equall my former height of liveing there: but you may perhapps find out a way (unknowne to mee) how I may subsist and have a being like a gentleman till you can heare I am safely arrived there or noe.' March 15, 1653

How Tom was to have 'a being like a gentleman' was a problem which all the family had tried in vain to solve ; but Sir Ralph sent Robert Lloyd to make arrangements for his departure, and if he would only betake himself 'anywhere, anywhere out of the world,' Sir Ralph promised him an increase of 10*l*. a year on his annuity, to be paid when he got there, and to cease if he ever came home again. The bribe had an agreeable sound. 'To depart hence,' wrote Tom, 'I am very willing, and to testifye that I am not wholly composed of words, I have here presented you with a proposeall, and that is, if you are pleased to accommodate mee with a cloth sute and cloak of six pound price and tenn pound in money, I shall ingage the word of a christian, my reputeation, and what else that may speak me honest, to depart the land in 10 dayes, with this provisoe that you will promise mee, that as soone as you shall heare when and where I am landed, to supply mee, when it shall be my due, with that small fortune my father left mee, and if you add to it, I shall thankfully receive it.' But the negotiations were long and elaborate. By the end of the month Tom had abandoned his Barbadoes project ; he craves his brother's consent 'for my spending this summer in a States man of warr. Noe damned bayliff, nor hellish sergeant can or dares disturb my abode there. A place secure enough and tenn pound will handsomely sett me upp, and I can begone out of the cryes of those cittye hell hounds, the next tide of ebb I have my money : ffor the place, where the states ffriggotts doe ride att anker, affords plenty of commodities that are for that my occasion.

The desperateness of the service nor the justness of the quarrell, doth not att all discourage mee ; for it is more honour to dye in the feild then in a stinking dark dungeon. My father and my brother shall be my patterne, if you say Amen to it. If I dye, it will strike a period to my worldly misery and free you of a great deal of care ; you can be noe great looser by it, whether I live or dye. If I live something will be my due, as in relation to my serveing them, besides another benefitt will accrew to mee, which is, I shall receive the benefitt of much aire, which now I extreamely want, and my annuitye will not be spent ffor I doe further declare unto you, that I shall not leave their service, unless extreamitye of sickness or desperate wounds, as the loss of any perticuler limb or the like, may call mee from it.' After this outburst of heroics Tom condescends to discuss the other plan—soldier or trader—it is all alike to him. He is still willing to go to the West Indies if Sir Ralph will provide him with labourers and 'such commodities to be delivered to mee there as should be vendible in the countrey.' Household utensils were apt to run short in the families of the English planters. From a schedule of the goods and chattels sold by Joseph Hawtayne in Barbadoes in 1643 we learn that he possessed 'one jugge, one table-cloth, six napkins, one frying-pan, eleven musketts & twoe Bibles.'

Tom had exchanged the confinement of the Fleet for a wretched lodging 'in Lambeth Marsh,' where he was 'allmost choaked up for want of aire,' but out of which he scarcely ventured to stir, except on Sundays, when debtors could not be arrested. 'Deare Brother, Solitariness is the sly enimye that doth allmost seperate a man from well doinge: but your aptness in complyeing with mee in my desires hath soe infinitely oblidged mee, that Seariously I want language to express my self to the full. A heart, and a most true and faithful one I have, wholly devoted to your service. . . . I must owne you rather for a father then a brother. . . . I request you then to give mee as much holland of 3*s*. 6*d*. an ell, as will make mee a shirt or two; for in truth I have but one . . . & that hath been a fortnight on my back allready. I am as well able to endure the lyeing on a bed of thornes, as the life I now lead; ffor what with unwholesome smells . . . and most noysome stinks, which clothworkers use about their cloth, as allso being drowned with melancholy, my life to mee is a burthen.'

April 4, 1653

'I doe know of a garment that would last mee to eternity, and it is to be purchased for less then forty shillings; which is a grave; and *that* I cannot have neither as yet; in time I shall, then I shall have a requiem sung unto my soul, and purchase a releas from this my miserable life to enjoy one more glorious; soe I thought to have made an end of this my sad complaint, but before I soe doe I make it my request to you, if I have either by writeing, or by word of mouth abused you, or spoken evilly of you (which to my knowledge I never yet did) as to bury it in the grave of oblivion, and to weigh those words of mine as proceeding wholly from a person drunk with passion, and overwhelmed with miseries.'

Sir Ralph sends him shirts, but refuses to advance any money, or to discuss his claims to enter upon a 'glorious' life, in a more appreciative world than here below. Tom writes again in his lofty style, being 'much nettled' by his brother's coolness: 'Mr. Lloyd, I am partly satisfied as being clothed by Sir Ra: but the reason that he gives for his not advancing the money I understand not; but am wounderfull desirous to know. God is my comfort; I am inocent of doeing any unworthy act, or takeing any unhandsome cours since August last; . . . Mr. Lloyd, it is pollicye, though not christian charity, for any one that denies to doe a pious deed, to ground that their deniall upon false surmises, and to fancye I still take ill courses, though I have for this half yearr in prison and out of prison lived hermitt like . . . my brother must delude children with such fancies. I understand him in that. I am too old to be caught. And when I have made my proposealls Sir Ra: will take an occasion then, to flye off, as he did, when I condescended to goe to the barbados'! May 24, 1653

Three days later he suddenly determines to resume the life of a soldier. 'I am to be listed to morrow in Collonell Ingolsby's regiment, and to trayle a pike in his one company: but am to march with them on Munday or teusday next to Dover, May 27, 1653 where the hollanders have made many shott, which putt the inhabitants into a fright, and have sent for ayd. Now this regiment haveing been in Dover formerly there in garrison, it is ordered by the Generall and Councell of officers to march forthwith thither againe: therefore, Sir, I make it my request to you that . . . with all convenient speed you will send after mee, a cloth sute and cloak, a gray dutch felt, a pairr of gray wolsted stockins, a paire of shoes, a paire of strong bucks lether gloves, and 3 bands, 3 paire of petitt cuffs, and 3 hand kerchers; and to furnish mee with a slite sword, and black lether belt (all not exceeding 6*l.* 10*s.*) sometime this day. . . . I shall then most willingly list my self as aforesayed to morrow early in the morneing in Saint Georg his fields. One thing I had allmost forgott, which is, perewiggs are not to be had in Dover, therefore I must crave to have that with mee: and if you pleas to speak to Mr. Lloyd to goe to the three Perewiggs, and 3 Crownes, in the Strand by Suffolk hous, and have but my name mentioned to the master of the hous, he being a frenchman, and knoweth the bigness of my head and what borders I usueally weare, he will by tuesday morneing next make mee one for ten shillings that shall doe mee service. . . . I beseech you hinder mee not.'

Another letter comes speedily on the heels of the former. 'I am to advertise you that I entered my self into the States service on Satturday last. As for the coat you bestowed on mee, the heat of the weather commanded mee to lay it by against winter, but that my doublett injoyned mee to the contrary by reason it covers the patches of my doublett and britches ; I cannot possibly march in it without much hazarding my health : And if I stay behind without leave, black will be my dayes.'

In September Tom acquaints his brother with his 'sudden & unexpected departure from England into Scotland.' He requires 7*l.* for 'the recruiteing myself with such needfull conveniences as the coldness and barrenness of that beggerly countrey together with my necessities doth require. Your refusall will caus mee to forsake my colours and in soe doeing I may be liable to a councell of warr, and even be punishable . . . thus leaveing the premises and my long and teadious marching a foot into Scotland unto your brotherly care of mee I take leave.'

Sir Ralph, taught by long experience to be sceptical, sends on the letter to Mr. Lloyd. . . . 'I pray enquire whether that Regiment, or that Company hee is in, doe goe, or noe, for I doe not heare that his Captaines company doe march that way ; but in case that this Mr. Palmer or any other friend of his will give him credit for 7*l.* to bee layd out in comodities for him, I will undertake to repay it uppon my Brother's arrivall in Scotland ; but if he goe not thether I will not pay it, for I would not have any more of those tricks put uppon me. I will also undertake it in case my Bro : dye before or in his jorney thether which I hope hee will not doe, till hee is better fitted for another World.' Mr. Gape on inquiry 'is confident there is no such matter, and . . . believes it onely a designe to worke upon Sir Ralph's good nature for money.' Tom, all unconscious that his brother was so well informed, waxed eloquent in describing this imaginary march into Scotland, the length of the way, the hardships of that 'frozen, barren country,' and his own prospective sufferings in the public service.

In November he is still in London, shivering and wanting 'the god of the world, money.' 'Were I clad suteable to the season of the yeare I might have prevented that which I feare will hang on mee all this winter, an extreame great cold I meane, which is soe irksome to mee, that by reason of my straineing my self when I cough, it may puff mee into a feavour. M^r ffrancis Lloyd hath not been wanteing in sending mee Lozanges and other things to eas mee, but in regard of our being putt to double duty I find little or noe eas . . . my necessities would require a supply of warme cloths : But how to gaine them, that is the question. Time was, when I have equallized my friends in curtesies, and though I have hitherto been clouded, and am brought to a very low ebb, yet their may come a floud of prosperitye, which may inable mee to express my self gratefull. All of us knowes our beginnings, but God knowes our endings. I referer the application to your one sweet self.'

'Had I not accidentally seene you in Lincolnes inn feildes,' Tom writes, 'yesterday, you being at that instant in discours with a gentleman in a gray cloth sute and cloak, of a reddish colloured haire; I had not troubled you with this letter, but beeing in hopes of your seeing and not seeing mee, by reason of the gentleman that was with you I have rather presumed once more, to put you in mind of my former request.' He proposes to wait upon his brother 'on Sunday morning next.' 'I have made choice of that day, because it is a day of security for mee to walk in, otherwise I am very sencible that it is an unseasonable day to visitt in.' Tom was nothing if not punctiliously devout. Dec. 10, 1653

On his next brotherly 'visitt' to beg for money, Tom not finding Sir Ralph at home, it 'proved some rubb[1] in his designe.' He writes from 'Mr. Hogg his hous in pide bull alley near the faulcon inn in Southwark': 'I am bound for the sea, and that in a stately shipp of the states, which is called the Lyon, one Lambert Cap^{tn} of her, shee rideing now att anchor in the Hope, and within three weeks shee will sett sayle towards the fleet. I shall not deny, but I may loos a legg or an arme or both, if I escape with my life. . . . Amidst the rest of my books I shall carry to sea, S^{r} Walter Rawley's history is the only one I want, it being a book I extreamely fancye, and Jan. 16, 1654 would be an excellent companion for mee att sea, but it is of to high a price for mee to buy . . . therefore I make it still, as all one suite, my request to you to write to Mr Robert Lloyd to buy mee the sayde book, and to put it to your accompte.' He kindly advises Sir Ralph to grant his requests at once, or 'I shall be putt to an unnecessary expense in commeing to you to argue it out with you.' The next letter was written on board the Lyon 'in Lee Rode.' Feb. 9, 1654 'My over hast hath proved somewhat to my prejudice; for in the handing of my small parcell of goods out of the Lee hoy aboard the Lyon, one of my bundls broke, and I lost 3 new shoes.' Would any shoes but Tom's have fallen overboard? 'I have sent up my fourth to my ensigne to have that matched, or one forthwith made to it, and to send mee downe one new payre more besides my patterne; the which 3 shoes I begg of you to pay for mee, and if I live to make a returne, I shall see you repayed.' Feb. 20, 1654 He writes 'of the division of our fleet, some for the coast of Ireland, some northward, some for the straites, and the remaining part to plye to and againe upon our Inglish channell, to free the sea of holland free-booters.' Tom had not been two months on board this 'stately shipp of the states,' and he does not seem to have lost any particular limb, when he is back in town, and again plaguing his brother for money to send him abroad.

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[1] 'As a *rubb* to an overthrown bowl proves a help by hindering it, so affliction brings the souls of God's saints to the mercy-seat.'—Fuller's *Holy State*, i. p. 2.

March 26, 1654 'To what part of the world am I most inclineable to repaire too? Give me leeve (I beseech you) to returne you this modest reply. Seeriously (for the present) I doe not well know. But be it either for Ireland, Scotland, fflaunders, Swethland, or Denmark, I shall give you notice where I am, becaus of haveing my annuitie returned mee, as it shall grow due. Moreover mee thinks you make an objection, and say, How doe I intend to imploy myselfe when I am abroad? Not in idleness I doe assure you: for experience telleth mee that that is the mother of mischief. A souldier I intend to be till better imployment proffer itself.' His desire to be gone was quickened by hearing that 'a citty sergeant' had been promised 40*s*. to arrest him, and was looking for his lodgings. 'A missunderstanding between the king and his subjects,' he writes magnificently to his brother, 'hath been the ruine of himself and his three kingdomes: and I feare it will prove mine, unless you take in good part my letters, which hitherto have savoured of nothing but a reall and cordiall affection. I once more implore your aid that I may secure my self from the jawes of the devoureing lions.' In April Tom shipped himself 'in the Hanniball, it being a merchantman is since cleared with divers others in the fleet, soe in my expence of ten pounds I gained six and thirty shillings, a hopefull voyage.'

In June his experiences were further varied, as the Government took notice of his eccentricities: 'Upon Munday about noone I was accused of high treason and carried to Whitehall, where I continued June 6, 1654 till yesterday being then fetched off upon bayle : but am forced to give my dayly attendance till I am examined which I am promised by Liuetenant Collonell Worsley shall be sometime this weeke. . . . You will assuredly heare of mee nere the council chamber or else find mee walkeing in the inner court in Whitehall about 10 of the clocke.' Nothing was proved against him, and he was soon discharged as an offender below the majesty of the Tower.

June 15, 1654

He had exhausted the patience of Sir Ralph's intermediary. 'This day being Thursday,' he writes, 'I sent to M^{r} Robert Lloyd for my weekly allowance, whose brother being in the shopp would neither receive my letter, nor permitt my messenger to speak with him, he being, att that instant in the hous : but foamed forth some scurrilous language injoyneing my messenger to tell mee that I must send no more thither ; for nothing that came from mee would be there received. . . . God in his mercy forgive them,' says this injured martyr, 'and cleans their harts from envy, hatred, and malice.'

The Lloyds refused to have any more dealings with Tom, even Roades had been 'disrespective.' 'There is no rulinge of Beares,' said Dr. Denton. 'It is an easy thing for Momus,' Tom writes, 'to pick quarrels in another man's tale, to make his one the better. I supplicate to non for there good word : it doth not sute with my nature soe to doe. It is best knowne to God how I have desired an amicable compliance with you all, and it hath much greived mee of the ill retaliation I have received from you all, perhapps I may exempt yourself. . . . I have made choice of one, who hath found my dealings soe just, will, if you pleas, take the trouble on him.' This admirable man was a Mr. Henry Palmer, whom Tom discovered later to be 'an adventurer.' He was most obliging in receiving Tom's allowance, but a little slack in transmitting it.

Genteel poverty had an additional burden to bear in the seventeenth century in that it required a wig. 'Good Brother,' writes Tom in October, 'I shall begg but one poore favour more . . . and that is for a border to keep mee warme which will cost mee tenn shillings. This morneing it was my ill happ to walk abroad earlier then ordinary and being a great foggy mist, I received some little prejudice by it in my head, my haire being very thin.'

By the end of 1654 Tom has gone back to his soldiering. In January 1655 he is begging as usual for 'a small subsistance dureing the time that God giveth mee to live in this miserable world.' In March he writes to Sir Ralph: 'I shall acquaint you with a motion that was made mee on thursday last, which I would gladly undertake. . . . It is to ride in the Protector his one troop, not in his life guard, but in his regiment of hors, which is now quartered in the west. . . . I conceive it farr better and somewhat more beneficiall to ride then to march on foot.' He begs Sir Ralph to advance 20*l.*, which would put him into this employment, to be repaid by 4*l.* quarterly.

'I am as well able to build Paul's as to rais it by credit or else how.'

April 22, 1655 In April he has had 'a tertian ague and a feaver (which through God's blessing and my uncle's care) I am recovered of; but to whose account the phisick will be put unto, I know not. If I had it by your order, I am to return you thanks, but if I am charged with it tenn shillings will defray all; ffor I had only a vomitt, glister, a cordiall, and breathed a vane.'[1] He is ambitious of adding a lawyer's bill to the doctor's. 'My father-in-law entred into a penall bond of six hundred pounds for the payment of 300*l.* in 6 months after his decease to S^r^ John Maynard (a trustee for me and my wife). . . . My wife hath fooled mee of the bond, which drives mee to a chancery sute to prove it.' The penniless debtor has engaged Sir Ralph's old friend John Fountaine as 'my counsel.' May 22, 1655 He writes importantly how he has to take out 'two severall commissions for Hampshire and Southamptonshire for the gayneing the testimony of my sister Gardiner and my brother and sister Elmes,' who were witnesses to the bond, 'which when that is done and attested by some gentlemen in the countrey, I shall gayne an order for the executors to pay mee what they and I shall agree upon.' Sir Ralph promptly declines to pay for the chancery suit, and Tom is loud in his indignation. 'Brother . . . you have not merited a brother's esteeme. . Sir, povertye may be blamed, but never shamed,' &c. He contrasts Sir Ralph's hardness with the generosity of his ensign, 'though he be noe brother nor any wayes allied more then by a few yeares acquainstance; yet pale-faced envye, mixt with hatred and mallice hath done there best indeavour to sett us att variance; seariously they have encountered with this my unmoveable freind, singly, and allso alltogether, and yet they could not alter him in his esteeme of mee. I could cordially wish I could say the like of you. . . . I shall attempt to see you,' though he is good enough to add it is 'not my desire to receive curtesye in a compulsive way.' May 23, 1655

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[1] To 'breathe a vein' is an old quasi-colloquial term for blood-letting, and 'probably expresses the sense of relief when a much distended vein is tapped.'

When Ralph himself is in trouble Tom improves the occasion. 'Sir, divisions in families are as much in effect as in a state or republique. They are the fore runners of mischiefs. God direct his judgements from us. Perhapps you may imagine I rejoyce att your misfortune, and att your restraint. Intruth I doe not.' Tom is in his foul-smelling lodgings in Lambeth Marsh, and again very sick; 'Dr. could neither come nor send, the river being well stored with ice.' He has a furious quarrel with Mr. Gape 'in my sister Mary's chamber'; 'shee was not wanteing in her indeavours to palliate and pacify us, which when she saw could not be done she wept.' 'My wings are clipt, my troubles are many, yet (glory be to God) I indifferently wage through them.' Tom has accidentally met with July 16, 1655 January 1656 March 1656

July 1656 Mr. Hall, 'who was once deputy marshal of the Marshalsea now Gaolor of the White Lion prison.' The financial matters connected with Sir Edmund's management of the Marshalsea had been long under discussion between his successor, Sir Edward Sydenham, and Sir Ralph; the Deputy Marshal was still unsatisfied, and asked to submit his claims to arbitration, in which case Tom would 'gladly be an instrument of good.' Sir Ralph next hears of him as having been mixed up in a robbery. Tom indignantly asserts that his brother's credulity 'doth August 9, 1656 not only feed the fancies of depraveing sycophants, but prompts mee to call your judgement and brotherly love into question. . . . Wee both had one father and mother, why should therefore our affections be soe alienated one from the other? An estate, perhapps, you may say; or that I have merited this strangeness from you by takeing base and unwarrantable courses, and in this my soe doeing the name and family is dishonoured by it. Admitt, Sir, this should be your reply. I hope you will not doe like the Mayor of Rye, when a malefactor was called before him, he sayd, lett us first hang him, then trye his caus. . . . You have beleeved severall things, as hath much intrencht upon my honour, fame and good name; as hath been as false as God is true . . . but I have a beleif that I shall as soone wash the blackamore white, as to alter your unmoved hatred towards mee.'

Tom entered into mining speculations that autumn, as less arduous than the soldiering and sailoring he had so hastily taken up and abandoned. In our day he would have written admirable prospectuses for confiding investors, and reports for shareholders of bubble companies. He is 'at Downam in Lancashire,' 'and a noble and true Oct. 23, 1656 loveing freind to mee hath att my request returned mee 50*l.* for I am sinking a mine and I wanted money to perfect it. It is more then a brother would have donn for mee.' His 'quarteridge' is to be paid 'to one Edward Gybbon Esq^{re} who was partly knowne unto you when you were in France.' April 4, 1657 Six months later Tom has left his 'minerall imployments, to answer the malice of Sir Tho: Thinn att our assizes. My Cozen Francis Drake had patience to stay on the bench till the witnesses of Thinn were examined, but when mine came to be called upon he took his leave and departed; perhapps feareing I might be worsted in it . . . but had he heard how I made appeare my innocency in the thing, I should have been better satisfied. It is truth the jury brought mee in guilty; but of what? not of the fact, but of too much indiscretion and rashness; which caused the judge and the major part of the justices to declare in open court, that they did really beleeve mee to be a person meerely drawne in, and they hoped it would be a warneing to mee for the future. Sir, when Sir Thomas Thinn understood the sence of the Bench, and that I was acquitted, paying my fees, he cunningly arrested mee in the face of the court, charging mee with an action of 500*l.* the which I have [word torn out] bayle too. It will not be long till he hath lex talionis, and soe we shall make it a cross action. Some tell mee he hath putt my name in print and that it is in Mercurius Polliticus. Two pence will tell mee the truth of that, therefore I shall say noe further . . . in relation to malitious Thinn . . . but humbly crave your furtherance of my journey northwards.'

April 27, 1657

He is detained in Lambeth Marsh (and no wonder) by fever and ague; the kind Royalist physician Dr. Hinton is attending him for love of his father: every other day the ague 'gives mee a visitt butt att uncertaine houres, which gives mee some hopes of its leaving mee. This day (being my well day) invites mee to putt penn to paper to impart unto your knowledge that my partners in the mines (hearing of my sickness) doe deal very unhandsomely by mee, by indeavouring . . . to work mee quite out. . . . Want of money to pay my proportionable share with my partners . . . makes my agreement with them of non-effect.' He begs Sir Ralph to go surety for him. 'A mine to you is of noe value becaus you understand it not, but I doe, and doe esteeme my interest in this my undertakeing to be worth to mee, before six months be fully expired, 600*l.* by the yeare. If I doe (beyond all your expectations) rais myself a fortune of 4,000*l.* or 5,000*l.*, when I dye I cannot carry it with mee, somebody will injoy it, you or yours may have it; strainger things then this hath come to pass. The designe I am upon promises a greater fortune then I speake of.' Sir Ralph drafts a reply for his servant to write to him; it is much to the point. 'M^r^ Verney, my Master desires you to excuse him for passing his word for money, hee is resolved against it and soe hee hath long declared, therefore you need not trouble your selfe any more in this kinde; this being all I have in command, I rest, your servant Rob^t^ Kibble.' May 1, 1657

Soon after this Tom turns up at 'Bottle Claydon,' but after a talk with Roades is not encouraged to go on to the House. 'Were the world in generall as unkind unto mee as a brother, I might well then complaine (like Job) miserable comforters are you all.' Sir Ralph had authorised the Steward to pay him *5l.*, and Tom extracted an extra *2l.* from Roades' good-nature. 'If I dye before quarter day my hors which I left in one of your closes is worth his adventure.' May 12, 1657

'My mines' continue to be most flourishing on paper, and in the future, but for the moment ready money is urgently required. Tom is at 'Sladburne in Yorkshire in the forrest of Bowland.' 'My minerall discoveries' have come to perfection, 'which will augment my small fortune betweene foure and five hundred pounds the year,' but a paltry sum is needed at once to 'continue my repute with my workmen. . . . I hope you will not envye the prosperity of my fortunes but rather smile at my fortunate success. I am confident there be some that doth indeavour to make strife betweene you and I: but as for my part June 15, 1657

I doe here declare myself to be an enimy of all pikthanks[1] and insinueating people, and I take it as noe small mercy in these giddy and unstable times, that God hath raised mee a brother that hath afforded mee such a comfortable subsistence.'

The poor wife who has long dropped out of the correspondence reappears in July 1657: she has returned from Malaga in great want, and Tom desires Roades to send her 2*l.* They are evidently not together. Tom has been in Leicestershire 'to the mine in Sir Seamour Shirley's ground,' but found all the ore disposed of, 'to as much as yielded 11*l.* 5*s.*; they told mee it was to pay wages and other necessaries, used about the worke. Where money is wanteing unreasonable accompts cannot be well questioned.' 'I doe still follow my minerall discoveries at Sladbourne . . . but leave the success to God.' Colonel Charles White, of 'Bearall neare Nottᵐ,' writes to Sir Ralph for 10*l.* he had advanced to Tom; his friend 'Mr. James Hallam will attend him with the acquittance.' Sir Ralph is obliged to reply that Tom had long ago desired him to pay that money to another creditor.

January 1658

During the interregnum following Richard Cromwell's fall, Tom falls into 'a labirinth of troubles.' 'Where to abide in these times of danger I know not,' he writes from East Claydon, 'ffor in my travell through Lancashire to Darbyshire, I was taken by the militia troop, & carried to Darby for a spye,

August 1659

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[1] 'By smiling pick-thanks and base newsmongers.'—*Henry IV.*

& had not I been known in the towne, I should have fared much wors then I did ; yet I was detained three dayes, before I could be discharged ; it was some more then ordinary charge to mee, I dare not lodge in any towne or village more then a night, least the like danger may befall mee. My present thoughts are for Sweden, there to abide till these dismall clouds are a little blowne over. Sir, I did promise (upon your granting my last request) not to trouble you till after michaelmass was past, in truth I . . . little thought of these grand mutations. God in his superabounding mercy, divert his wrath from falling on us.'

He writes again to Kibble from East Claydon : 'I ought to have taken shipping att Hastings in Sussex, but by reason Sir George Booth was att that time taken, they were soe strickt that I could not find out a meanes to goe ; neither doe I well know where to take up my abideing place. Times are soe dangerous . . . Charity waxeth cold everywhere. . . . Yours to his power THOS : VERNEY.' Nov. 15, 1659

Kibble sends him 40*s*. from his master ; and Tom for once seems grateful. 'By your meanes and brotherly affection I am inabled to travel somewhat further. God restore your charity an hundredfold . . . sweet brother yours most affectionately to serve you.'

The next spring : 'Mr. Palmer (my dayly tormentor) is in hott persuit after mee with his bayliff barking currs, that I am forced to be vigilant least I should be by him insnared . . . my intentions are both for cheapness & privacy to journey into North Wales unto a place called Anglesey some 250 miles . . . could you but spare mee one of your cast suits & my younger brother a low prized horse.' And so the forlorn wretch disappears from view till the 'grand mutations' are over, and it is profitable once more to proclaim one's self a Cavalier.

After the Restoration he has thoughts of accompanying the Lord Windsor to Jamaica, but lacks a sufficient outfit; and in 1662 we hear something of his domestic history in a letter of Dr. Denton's to Sir Ralph. Dec. 4, 1662 'I hope Tom will not be such a clowne as offer to come to you without his new spouse. I can assure you he & she were very fine & at a play on tuesday last; . . . he had with her 4 or 500*l.* in money; 50*l.* a yeare besides some expectacions after the death of frendes. There's your man Sir.' Tom was not driven to so desperate a step without cause. July 1, 1660 He complains: 'I doe not love to trumpett out the great paines & care I have (for 4 yeares last past) taken to rais a lively hood, and if it hath not pleased God to prosper my indeavours, my ingenuity is not to be blamed. It is a Scripture saying, that Paul doth plant, and Apollo water, but it is God that doth give the increase. . . . Sir the ant reads mee a lecture of providence & industrye which I have indeavoured to imitate; the bee allso of witt & sagacity; for this little foul when shee goeth abroad a forrageing, and is (perhaps) surprised with windy weather before shee returns back againe, takes up some gravell in her fangs to ballance her little body, then shee hoyseth sayle and steeres her cours homewards more steadily.' With such pious and scientific motives Tom seems to have taken up a wife in his fangs as ballast, and now with a more or less happy shot at the long Welsh name, he announces that he is 'upon purchasing a leas of the King for all his majestie's waste lands, lyeing in the parish of Llan vh=angell-croythin, in the county of Cardigan in South Wales: but I cannot gett Sir Charles Herbord to make a report of the King his reference on my petition till he hath received a certicate from Mr. John Vaughan, who is his majestie's steward in those parts; which hath occasioned my takeing a journey into Wales to make M^r^ Vaughan my friend.' He proposes to visit Sister Mary by the way. Nov. 24 1662

Tom refers to his second wife as 'a mayden gentlewoman, who is the eldest daughter of the Kendals of Smithsby in Darbyshire, of an ancient family, though of noe very great estate, yet her portion would be worth 1200*l.* if it were well secured.' He is plunging into a lawsuit to obtain it, for which Sir Ralph is to provide the money. 'I would not have my wife to be sencible of my wants becaus I have hitherto possest her with the contrary. . . . Sir my letters are ever over teadious, which you (in your candid nature) pass by, it being your brother's error'; and lest any doubt should linger in our minds as to Tom's motives, we have this testimonial which he Feb. 12, 1663 gave himself on 'St. Thomas Day, 1661: Sir,—Want is the greatest provoker to mischeif, experience telleth mee the same, I could wish the occasion were taken away, and you would soone heare of an alteration in mee, *ffor I am not natureally inclined to evill.*'

CHAPTER VI.

DOCTOR WILLIAM DENTON.

1605–1658.

'Necessary and ancient their Profession, ever since man's body was subject to enmity and casualty: for that promise "A bone of him shall not be broken" is peculiar to Christ.'—FULLER.

DR. WILLIAM DENTON, whose letters have been so largely quoted in these volumes, was the youngest son and eighth child in a family of thirteen, twelve of whom lived into middle life, and most of them to old age. His father, Sir Thomas Denton, and his mother, Susan Temple, were both endowed with strong health and vigorous understandings; William was born in her old home at Stowe on April 14, 1605.[1]

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[1] Children of Sir Thomas and Dame Susan Denton:—

Sons.

Sir Alexander, b. 1596 = Mary Hampden, d. 1645.
John, b. 1598, a barrister of Lincoln's Inn.
Paul, b. 1599, d.s.p. 1678.
Thomas, b. 1600, d.s.p. 1678.
George 'died in Holland.'
William = Katherine Fuller.

Daughters.

Margaret, b. 1594 = Sir Ed. Verney.
Susan = Capt. Jeremiah Abercrombie.

The Dentons and the Temples had large families in several succeeding generations; the Doctor's mother had been one of twelve children, and his Aunt Hester Sands, wife of Sir Thomas Temple, 'had four sons and nine daughters, which lived to be married and so exceedingly multiplied that this Lady saw 700 extracted from her body. . . . Thus in all ages,' says pious Fuller, 'God bestoweth personal felicities on some far above the proportion of others.' Doctor Denton's share in these 'personal felicities' was the possession of such a number of first and second cousins, that there was scarcely a county family in Bucks to whom he was not related; a fact which gave him a great deal of social influence when added to his personal popularity and his professional reputation.

Educated, like Sir Ralph, at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, he studied medicine under a famous physician, Henry Ashworth. He took his doctor's degree at the age of twenty-nine; two years later, in 1636, he was appointed Court Physician to Charles I., and attended upon his person in the Scotch war of 1639.[1] After the destruction of 'sweet Hillesden' House, and the death of his eldest brother in the Tower,[2] the Doctor and his lawyer brother John did their best for Sir Alexander's

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Bridget, b. 1607 = Sir Edward Fust.
Elizabeth, b. 1610 = Thomas Isham of Pytchley.
Anne, b. 1611, d. unmarried.
Margaret, b. 1612 = 1st, John Pulteney; 2nd, Hon. Wm. Eure; 3rd, Hon. Philip Sherard.

[1] See vol. i. pp. 303, 307.

[2] Vol. ii. pp. 188–205.

fatherless and motherless children. The eldest son, John, met with a soldier's death in the Civil War; Elizabeth, the eldest daughter, married Francis Drake in 1637 at Middle Claydon; Margaret married Sir William Smith just before her father's death in 1644; Sophia died in childhood; but four boys, Edmund, Alexander, Thomas, and George, and five girls, Susan, Anne, Arabella, Mary, and Dorothy, remained to be provided for out of the wreck of the family fortunes. Some of the relations, while taking care to do nothing themselves, advised that Ralph and Mary should adopt the girls; but as they had his five young sisters to care for, Mary declined the suggestion with some warmth. So the charge of the little flock of orphans fell chiefly upon Doctor Denton. He thought of sending Edmund abroad to complete his education, but the youth provided for himself more agreeably by an early marriage with an heiress, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Richard Rogers, Kt., of Eastwood, co. Gloucester; Alexander read law, and eventually became a Bencher of the Middle Temple, succeeding his uncle John as the legal adviser of the family; Thomas and George, in default of more genteel openings, were apprenticed to linendrapers. The girls turned out creditably. Soon after Mary's funeral there was a quiet little wedding at Claydon, when Susanna Denton gave her hand to Robert Townsend, the worthy Rector of Radcliffe; Anne became the wife of George Woodward of Stratton Dec. 19, 1650 Audley; Mary, some years later, married John

Townsend, younger brother of Robert; Arabella and Dorothy remained spinsters; the gravestone of the latter at Hillesden shows that she died, in 1712, in a ripe old age. For some years all went well, except that young Edmund's hospitalities were on a much larger scale than his uncle thought prudent; he was rebuilding his house, and the Doctor speaks of himself as a wandering Jew 'that have my Manors of Claydon, Hillesden, & Stowe to keep revell rout in, but not a foot of land in the county.' Then suddenly the young Squire of Hillesden died, leaving his heir, scarce three years old, with two baby brothers, to be cared for by their great-uncle as he had cared for their father and uncles before them. The little Alexander was one of Sir Ralph's many god-children, and very kindly did he also look after him.

Sept. 1652

Doctor Denton's ideal of womanhood was Mary Verney, whom he worshipped with reverent and entire devotion. The friendship on both sides was a beautiful one, and though Doctor Denton's wife, who was made of commoner clay, thought Dame Mary vastly overrated, her husband rejoiced at the Doctor's great appreciation of one whom he himself always described as an 'incomparable person.' When the supreme sorrow of Ralph's life fell upon him his uncle's sympathy was his best earthly support. The Doctor was heart-broken that the husband and wife he loved so well should be 'dissevered and disunited in a strange land,' but with

Ralph and all other mourners he strove to minister from the highest sources to a mind diseased. 'Some Saints have beene excessive in mourninge,' he wrote, 'as David for Absalom and Rachel for her children, but Christ disliked Jewish minstrelsy for increase of sorrow. If ever I had found that God had respected the person of Princes or of the rich, more then of the poore, I had longe sinse been confounded in my selfe, but when I consider that God spared not the Angells for their excellency, nor the old world for their multitude, nor Jerusalem for its faire buildings, nor Saul for his personage, nor Absalom for his beauty, I comfort myselfe wth this that God giveth and God (not the Sabæans) taketh away, and blessed be the name of the Lord. . . . I pray God guide us all wth his councells while we live and afterwards receave us to glory. Adieu, Deare Ralph, Adieu.'

It seems strange, after such a letter, to hear the Doctor described by Sir George Wheler, who knew him well, as 'an Ingenious and Phasesious man,' who, 'for his Polite conversation among the Ladies of Charles I's Court was called the Speaker of the Parliament of Weoman.'[1] But his humour was as spontaneous and genuine as his piety, and he could be as 'nice' and as 'curious' in his discourse as any of the Court wits of the day.

The Speaker of the Parliament of Women was not very happy in his own choice of a partner, though he made several ventures. His first two wives are mere shadows ; they left no mark on the family history, nor are their very names recorded on the Doctor's tombstone : one (we learn from a scrap of paper in Lord Fermanagh's genealogical notes) was 'Lady Muschamp of Yorkshire.' His third wife and the mother of his only child was Catherine, daughter of Bostock Fuller, Esq., of Tandridge Court, Herts, and widow of Edmund Bert. 'Queen Katherine,' as her husband called her, was a loud, hearty, vulgar woman, affectionate and impulsive. She had four children, at least, when she married the Doctor. With his large income and a house in the then fashionable quarter of Covent Garden, they lived in the best society of the town. We constantly hear of their hospitalities and engagements : they are dining with my Lady Suffolk, with my Lord Mulgrave, or with the Countess of Barrimore : Lady Fust and Lady Hastings dine with them, 'and Lady Heale etc. have invited themselves' to Mrs. Denton's at night. 'Doctor's widow,' as she was illogically styled in the family, was a woman of generous tastes, prompt to spend all the money that he made. The silk gowns of the Miss Berts excited the envy of the better-born and much worse-dressed Miss Verneys, and turned the head of the worthy apothecary William Gape, who with the help of three young Welshmen, Henry Foulkes and the brothers Francis and Robert Lloyd, made up the medicines and ran about upon the Doctor's errands. The marriage of Moll Bert and William Gape in

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[1] *The Genealogist*, vol. iii. p. 47.

1648 has been already told.[1] In the autumn of 1650 Dr. Denton writes: 'It pleased God to take my wife's Pegge to himselfe on friday last, for w^{ch} she is straingly afflicted, I pray God comfort her, the death and sicknesse of these two children have cost me above 100*l.* extraordinary which forces me to sell my plate.' The Doctor's impulsive generosity often brought him for a time into financial straits. Oct. 20, 1650

The next spring Sir Ralph's dearly loved sister Susan died. Such constancy as his own was rare, and scarce five months after he had received the widower's broken-hearted letter[2] he heard from Dr. Denton that he was marrying his remaining step-daughter Betty Bert to 'Brother Alport,' and that he had 'leapt into a debt of neare 1,000*l.*; 500*l.* to Alport, and 200*l.* to Gape.' Sir Ralph thinks his gifts to his wife's daughters more liberal than wise, for, however good a physician he might be, he could not ensure himself a long life. The Doctor writes again: 'I am soe busie about marrying my Betty to your Brother Alp: that I have scarse any time to write. . . . Your accounts . . . shall be sent . . . if weddinge affaires hinder not'; and on the 4th of August he is 'at a Taverne having this day married Betty to Alport.' Sir Ralph is gently sarcastic in his congratulations: 'I wish your daughter Betty all the Hapinesse she can desire or hope for with my Bro: Alp:; God grant her life that shee may prevent July 31, 1651 the trouble of his Fourth wooing.' This pious wish was granted : Betty Bert did not give Mr. Alport the trouble of marrying again ; she did so herself, and after his decease became the second wife of Mr. Leche of Carden.[1]

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[1] See vol. ii. p. 314.

[2] See vol. ii. p. 386.

Nov. 10, 1653

After the family gathering at Claydon to celebrate Sir Ralph's return Dr. Denton writes : 'Noble Knight, If you had taught me but halfe as well as you fedd me, I should have had more manners, and you more thanks. I know you have a lusty faith, and you cannot better imploy it then to beleeve that I wish and love you as well as they that tell y^u soe in more quaint termes, therefore take my downright harty thanks with out welt or guarde.[2] My wife is very considerate and returns you her thanks [Sir Ralph offered to pay her journey to Overton to visit Betty Alport], but consideringe that she hath putt you to trouble and charge enough already, and therefore for feare, as Tom footman saies, you should not be worth a groat, she is resolved to save you 20*s*. and will not goe to Chesshire. Y^{rs} body and bones, WM. D.' Mrs. Denton desires that Sir Ralph should send her an old shirt for 'clouts,' even if it should be his last.

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[1] Lord Fermanagh's note-book records the names of some of their children : 'John Alport dyed Cœlebs, Robert Alport married Manwaring and left issue ; Katherine married to Parson Wright ; another daughter became Mrs. Dodd.' Betty also left 'several children' by her second husband, but the present family at Carden descend from Mr. Leche's first wife.

[2] 'The body of your discourse is sometimes guarded with fragments.'—*Much Ado*, I. i. 237.

Moll Gape affected sporting tastes, difficult of indulgence in the apothecary's London house. She writes to Sir Ralph after a visit to Claydon: 'Sir, Trey I thinke is just now upon her delivery, she hath had 12 pupyes but halfe of them bee dead, but them that are liveing are very fatt and by the next returne they will send you downe many thankes for the bones of your partridges and larkes. Pug is very well but hee is now very malancholy for hee hath sate alone in the darke all this night. Lewis hath bin att Billingsgate eateing oysters with her bulliboyes, wee dranke two bottles of rhenish wine in the must last night, when wee wished heartily for Gaffer Verney, and soe wee shall upon Fryday att dinner, but att night a fyg for the Knight: soe farewell. YRAM PAGE.' Mary Gape seems to have thought it vastly witty to transpose the letters of her name. Jan. 18, 1654

Another day she is determined to surprise Sir Ralph without his wig, 'for she threatens hard that if she comes to Claydon she will steale a paire of your breeches and putt them on, and then she will venture to see your bald pate, and she bids you clap while youle clap.' Mrs. Gape is always putting in quaint messages and postscripts. She writes across a business letter of her husband's to Sir Ralph: 'Yram Page's service to her executioner.' She was her mother's own child. This is how 'Doctor's Widow' approaches Sir Ralph about a tailor, a namesake of their own, who had forfeited his custom by spoiling a suit made for little John:— June 1654

May 11, 1654

'Ris hplar [she reverses Sir Ralph's name as she does her own], I have bin so earnestly solicited by Mr. Denton and his wife that hee might have your worke againe, who is extreamly [sorry] that any thing passed from him to offend you in that nature, and if you will bee pleased to accept of him, hee will bee very diligent to give you content for the time to come. And now I have spoken for him . . . I will not bee denyed, the next time you have occasion to make use of one of his trade that he must be the man, and Yram Page saithe that you are a very Ill Conditioned man and of a currish nature, and the next payre of breeches that any other taylor shall make you but hee, I wish your breech may stand wher your belly should bee, soe expecting to finde you in a charitable minde, I rest youre affectionate Aunte and Servent, ENIRHTAK NOTNED.' Her intercession prevailed, and Denton the tailor continued to make the family suits for many subsequent years.

If Mistress Kate lacked refinement, she was a good-natured, comfortable wife: she mothered little Jack Verney very kindly after his return from Blois, and when he went to school 'Queen Katherine cried downe right to part with him.' Doctor Denton, with the sweet temper and ready tact that made him so welcome in other people's homes, was not likely to make difficulties in his own. He had been the most indulgent of stepfathers, and the birth of his own child Anne, in 1640, made him supremely happy. Sir Ralph's affection for Nancy was another link between them, and 'Kate and Monkey' were always welcome at Claydon when the Doctor wished to send them out of town. 'Wife begins her march on Munday,' he writes to Sir Ralph on one of these occasions, 'and Munkay with her, I would advise you to quitt your country honourably before Munkey comes, least she make you fly it shamefully afterwards.' How much Nancy enjoyed the visits to her godfather we gather from a letter of Dr. Denton's about one of his own great-nephews: 'He is a forward young sparke and takes it ill if the whole house will not doe as he dictates, and talks as often and as boldly in the house as Munkey to old Raph.' 'Claydon doth not want us, soe much as we want Claydon,' wrote the Doctor in answer to one of his nephew's pressing invitations, 'nor Ralph want Kate, soe much as Kate wants Ralph, or else she lies abominably.'

Never was a friendship more perfect and more enduring than that between William Denton and Ralph Verney. 'I confesse Meum and Tuum devides most men,' wrote the latter about some business complications, 'but by the grace of God it shall never devide us,' and it never did. He was such a man as Bacon commended in the quaint phrases of his day: 'You may take Sarza to open the liver; Steele to open the Spleene; Flowers of Sulphur for the Lungs; Castoreum for the Braine; but no Receipt openeth the Heart but a true Frend.'

When Dr. Denton entered the profession a new world was opening to science: alchemy was giving place to chemistry, and medical treatment was beginning to be based upon clinical experiment and observation, rather than upon tradition and hypothesis. If his name is not associated with original research, at least he laboured assiduously to keep himself informed of the great discoveries of his age, both in England and on the Continent. Unwearied in his devotion to the sick and suffering, so little hardened by familiarity that he could never attend a death-bed without being deeply moved, he was the trusted adviser and reconciler in many dark hours of family history. With a large hopefulness and toleration born of his wide acquaintance with human nature, with a caustic tongue, and a generous heart, he maintained the high traditions of his noble profession. He was a voracious reader, specially of theology and philosophy; a letter written by him, as a mere youth, to Ralph, as a schoolboy, shows the serious bent of his mind from his earliest years. He had sent his nephew his own copies of Justin and Salvian: 'Amongst other advertisements for your study, I desire to cast in but one, that divinity, the pracktique (for knowledge alone doth not save) be ever att both ends of your other studys, for without that there can be no true content in any study. There is noe end of makinge many bookes and much study is a wearisomness of the flesh, feare God and keepe his commandments for this is the whole duty of man.'

Dr. Denton rushed about in town and out of town, just as our great doctors do to-day. 'It would be a very great hindrance to him if he should be absent from the towne but tenn dayes, for he hath been offered a great deale of money to goe but fivety miles out of towne, and he could nott.' When he hopes to allow himself a short holiday at Claydon, he is stopped by a message from a patient, after he had sent his man on, and was actually about 'to putt foot in coach.' This is his account of a week in June 1650:—

March 1648

'Dear Raph, I have since Thursday last (the day my boy was cutt for the stone and one round flat nugget was taken out about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an oz weight) beene almost confounded with business, so that I have scarse had a minute's time to putt pen to paper, and this very day betweene attendinge my Lady Syd[enham] in a vomitt (who was as sick a creature as ever I sawe) and attending the sessions in giving evidence uppon life and death in a businesse of the murther of M^r^ Ozler the Ser: in w^ch^ I doubt one M^r^ Bovy will suffer, though I am clearly satisfied he died not of the wounds; and this with my not receiving any letter from you this week (though happily it may ere this be at my house where I have not beene these many hours) must excuse my cutted writing.' 'I have been sent for downe by my Lady Temple but denied her,' he writes another time, 'but if I thought T. Isham would be sick I would make a virtue of necessity.'

March 1654

In August 1657, though very loath to leave town, the Doctor has an earnest request to visit Lady Wenman at Thame Park: she was a Hampden, a connection of Sir Alexander Denton's wife. He 'writt to my Lady hopinge to have had a Quietus es, but her answere was not able to endure the hearinge of my not cominge, soe I doe resolve to wait on her this weeke.' Arrived at Thame, he has other calls upon him. 'I doubt, I shall be in a posture to stir from hence this weeke, because I must make thinges ready to put my L^d and Lady in a course for phisick.' On the 8th he reports progress to Sir Ralph. 'My Lady was purged yesterday, & my Lord vomited today, and untill I have settled them, I cannot with any conveniency stirre any whither.' He gets over to Hillesden, but must fly back again, having only left my Lord and my Lady physic enough to last till the 15th.

Sept. 5, 1657

All through his early years he had done his business on horseback, but about the age of forty-five the desire for a coach gradually grew upon him, and 'Queen Katherine' yearned for a phaeton. Sir Ralph warned him that 'a coach were more convenient than healthfull for you, but you may venture on it, for I will exercise you. If you resolve to keepe one tell me soe, and deferre it for a time, the Weather will not yet bee ill, and tell me if you like a coach with one end, and a Bed as are used in France, or with 2 ends, y^e first is light, and holds but 6, the other heavy and holds 8, and soe more apt to breake,

Sept. 18, 1652

and kill horses too.' Such accidents with the ponderous carriages and heavy roads entailed heavy expenses, 'insomuch as some stick not to averr,' says a contemporary pamphlet, 'that before the common use of Coaches, few but Traytors or Felons made shipwrack of their freeholds.'

'I thanked God we gott safe to Claydon on Satterday night,' the Doctor wrote to Sir Ralph, who was absent, 'but I left one of my coach horses dead at Alisbury which doth much disgruntle me, not soe much for y^{e} valew as for y^{e} disfurnishinge me to all intents and purposes, for he was not only for my coach but he paced as easy as any sitt horse, and if I had had occasion to have ridden 40 or twice 40 miles quickly, he would have done that to. Soe much for a dead horse.' Another time his nephew, Mun Denton, is to 'have his horses in readiness to helpe pull me through the dirt from Alisbury.' On a journey to Cheshire in 1656, for Betty Alport's confinement, 'Doctor lam'd but 3 of his 4 horses by the way soe hee got safe though not sound to Overton'; with such delays the crisis was over before the Doctor's arrival. He managed, however, to be in time for the christening, which was 'not without a fidler and the merry cup, and the toast of Sir Ralph's health.' The return journey was equally difficult; the coachman got an ague, 'soe betweene lame horses and lame coachman and rayny weather we are to gett home as we can. My mare proved well beyond expectation, but at present is gravelled and soe we are coach bound.' The sick coach-horses of the family, like the children, came to Claydon for change of air and good country food. 'I quite forgot to see my coach when last att Claydon,' writes Dr. Denton to Sir Ralph. 'I pray give it a visitt, & if mouldy, I know you are soe cleanly a person as to gett it wiped.'

June 4, 1657

There are constant jokes about his steeds; one cost him 8*l.*, and he would not willingly sell it for less. 'Most excellent Caufe Ralph,' he writes on August 13, 'I see you will never loose that name which was given you before you were Xtened, whilst you can goe 9 miles to suck a Bull & come home athirst. I am wonderfully pleased that you were cheated, because you cheated me, & did not lett me know you were in y^e^ country. But to stop your mouth from wranglinge with your Doctor (who intends you all kindness possible) hee will have a writt of remove for his colts from Hillesdon to Claydon & soe you shall be cheated noe more; lesse he cannot doe in prudence to his owne concerne, seeinge his other rare palfry hath had such experience of your soyle as to put him off for £7. 2. 6. which certainly was by reason of his gay cloathes he gott att Claydon & not his goodnes. I should be sorry if . . . Mun had not my letter to him, wherein was a token of my love to him even a wonderful ballat not inferiour to that of Guy of Warwick.' Henry was quite reckless of the trouble given by his beasts at Claydon; he has a mare no hedge or rails will hold, of whom he writes: 'I like it well that all my cattle prove as madd as myselfe for that is a true testimony of their goodness.'

A physician's fees in the seventeenth century seem large in proportion to the pay of other professions, and the laity then as now grumbled and paid. 'Sir Theodore Mayerne is buryed,' writes Dr. Denton, 'and died worth 140,000*l*.' Sir Ralph thought 30*l*. too small a fee to pay Dr. Denton for his attendance on his wife during her confinement, but for his pressing poverty he would have sent him 50*l*., equal to about 200*l*. of our present money. Dr. Radcliffe's regular fees were estimated to bring him in an income of at least 4,000*l*. a year; Dr. Mead's were valued at between 5,000*l*. and 6,000*l*. Sir George Wheler's sickness after a Christmas dinner at Dr. Denton's, cost him 'the best part of 100 pounds.' He had caught a chill after dancing, which turned to 'a spotted feavour'; Sir George Ent was called in: he had all sorts of 'Applications of Blisters and Loudanums.' 'My Apothecary's . . . bill came to 28*l*. He was a good man, and told me, if I fell into a feavour again, Sage Possit would do me as much good as all the Physitians Prescriptions.' Wheler adds that Sir George Ent continued 'ever after my kind friend to his death.'[1] Sir Ralph was glad to borrow money of his wealthy neighbour, Dr. Bate, the famous Oxford physician, and when he found the interest burdensome he hoped that the Doctor might

April 5, 1655

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[1] See *Genealogist*, vol. iii. pp. 47, 48.

be willing to take land of him in settlement of his claims, but he declined.

Many physicians were men of good family and social position ; several of them were spending large fortunes in the most public-spirited way. Dr. Thomas Sydenham held one of the highest positions a politician and legislator could rise to under the Commonwealth, as a member of the Council of State. His brother, Colonel William Sydenham, was Governor of the Isle of Wight, and called to be a member of Cromwell's Upper House. Dr. Radcliffe sat for Buckingham in Parliament. But some of the old Royalist families in the shires refused to admit a physician into their society, or to grant him the position which he naturally held in London. This was emphatically the case with the Ishams, who as large landowners and members of Parliament held the same place in Northamptonshire that the Verneys did in Buckinghamshire, and who were connected with them by ties of friendship and by the alliance of both families with the Dentons.

Dr. Laurence Wright, physician in ordinary to Oliver Cromwell, who held a distinguished office in the College of Physicians, and had a large and lucrative practice, was desirous that his only son should make a fashionable marriage. Sir Ralph wrote for him to Sir Justinian Isham : 'Sir, Being casually at a place where D^r^ Wright was visiting a patient, amoungst other discourse one told him shee heard his sonne was a sutor to one of your Daughters in

London, April 9, 1656

Suffolk; whereuppon hee acknowledged there had been a motion to that purpose, expressed a very good esteeme both of your person and family, and how good a carracter my Lady Spring had given him of these young Ladies, soe that I see no reason but the businesse might succeed if you desire it. The young man I doe not know, but I heare so well of him, and know so much of his father, that I can say with confidence very few in England can have greater choyce of greater Fortunes, but money is not the thing he cheifly aimes at in his sonnes marriage.' If Sir Justinian will settle 5,000*l.* on his daughter the young man is ready to wait upon him at Lamport, and then to proceed to Suffolk to court the young lady. Sir Ralph had no idea that this aspirant had been rejected unseen and unheard three months before. The Miss Ishams had determined that the son of Cromwell's doctor must be an altogether vulgar creature, and a snuffling Puritan; they too announced that 'money was not the thing they chiefly aimed at in marriage,' and they induced a friend of their father's, Mr. John Stuteville, to write their views to him.

To Sir Justinian Isham.[1]

'Worthy Sir,—Since your last came to my hands, I have received reasonable good information concerning the parties mentioned in your letter, from a Lady not farre distant from us, who being with a sister of Jan. 12 1656 hers sicke in London, this last summer had an occasion offered of more particular notice both of the Doctor and his Sonne: shee agrees with you, that the ffather is an able man in his way, having had long experience and practise in it, and that hee hath a very great fortune, but particularly what shee knows not: that the Sonne is a tall slender handsome man but somewhat blacke; Very gallant, but civill with all (a quality rare enough in these times): nay more, that hee is Religious too (a thing much pretended to, but little practised): but how farre his Religion may goe, whither to Scisme or noe, I know not, but feare the worst, seing the Lady hir selfe, who delivered it, is not altogether ffree. I should have beene more inquisitive after them from hir selfe and others neere us, but that I am commanded from my Lady [Elizabeth, wife of Sir Anthony Denton] to let you know, that not with standing these abilities, and fortunes in the ffather, not with standing all these splendours and civilities in the Sonne, yet, that hee is not a fit match for any of S^{r} Justinian Isham's daughters, and that not onely for that Scruple you make in his Religion, which (as it is the greatest tye betweene God and us, soe it must bee the greatest betweene husband and wife, and with out which there is not that harmony in marriage, as is requisite, and therefore) ought very much to bee regarded: but for other reasons also to bee gathered out of yours as that hee is very curious and hard to bee pleased: indeed hee hath beene soe inquisitive, as to know of what constitution, complexion, &c. your daughters are of, as if hee were to administer Physicke to them, and that they who were to bee his Sonnes wives, were to bee his Patients for Ever: Neither are your daughters his first choice, hee hath beene offered to others, and whither broke off upon that curiositie of his, or noe, I know not. But this is not all, I doe not find in your letter or by any relation can I get any thing of his originall, and therefore feare hee is but ex plebe, and allied perhaps to some neere you that may endeavor and further it. Truly S^r^ if hee bee soe, I leave it to your selfe to judge, whither hee bee suitable for any of them: In these degenerating times, the gentry had need to close neerer together, and make a banke and bulwarke against that Sea of Democracy which is over running them: and to keepe their descents pure and untainted from that Mungrill breed, which would faigne mixe with them: Wee know there are never any aspects accounted of betweene Constellations and Planets: they are onely among the Planets themselves which are in inferior Orbes: there are Planets enough in that Spheare hee mooves in, where hee may meete with some Venus or other who may cast a more favourable aspect upon his Mars or Mercury, than they are like to do, and with whom beeing in Conjunction and especially near Cauda Draconis, it may foretell more content and fortunacie in his yeare. I know a Gentleman related to your Selfe, but a younger Brother and every way farre your inferior, who was offred a very considerable fortune with a wife, beyond either his desert or expectation: yet because it was with a Physitian's daughter, the very thought of y^e Blister-pipes did Nauseate his Stomacke. And great is the discourse at this very time about a Norffok Baronets matching with a Doctor of Divinities daughter in Cambridge, and yet wee know Divinitie is the highest, as Physicke the lowest of Professiones. Your Daughters live contentedly and happily as they are, and (if they bee not burdensome to you, as they are not to my Lady) their desire is, not yet to change their condicion, but upon greater advantage and preferment, then they are like to meete with heere. A farre lesse estate with more honour, would better suite them, then soe great a one with out gentility: which (to use their owne words) they account of but as a guilded Pill, guilded in his ffortunes, but bitter in his Extraction. Indeed there may bee a great deale of the Politicks in it, but there appeares very litle of the Œconomicks to raise, and constitute a ffamily upon such disproportioned materials. Thus I have delivered my Ladies opinian, which that you may know to bee hirs, shee hath signed it with hir owne hand, and to testifie my assent, I shall after the tender of due respects, duty and service to your selfe, Lady, and my Cosen Susan subscribe my selfe as I really am, a most devoted servant to you all.

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[1] This letter, No. 353 of the Isham MSS., is printed by the kind permission of Sir Charles and Lady Isham.

'ELIZABETH DENTON.
'J. STUTEVILLE.'

The eldest Miss Isham died a spinster; the second, true to her principles, married a poor knight of irreproachable descent, with an old house and garden; the ambitious Dr. Laurence Wright and his wife died soon afterwards, within a few months of each other,[1] leaving the 'guilded pill' to the sole enjoyment of their ample income. William Gape writes to Sir Ralph that Lady Hobart 'wants your Doctor in towne to help him to Dr Wright's patients.' Oct. 9, 1657

Dr. Denton's letters are written in a neat, precise hand on small paper, they are short and to the point, and free from the long-winded compliments of the day. His customary ending is 'Vale,' and when he has greetings to send he compresses them into three words, 'all to all.' 'I alwaies seale with my Armes or with Æsculapius,' he says in 1656, when asking Sir Ralph to see whether his letters have been opened. In the summer of 1653 he had a short but severe attack of illness, to the great displeasure and inconvenience of the invalids of the family, who were accustomed to count upon his professional services 'as a friend,' as Penelope expressed it, without always feeling it incumbent upon them, as Sir Ralph did, to press a fee upon his acceptance. Pen's husband was very ill just when Dr. Denton was laid up himself. 'Hee is in great dangour,' wrote his wife, 'without it dos pleas god to aswag the sweling; it swels soe, and into his throt, that if the surgin cannot A swag it, I fere it may choke him in a short time . . . if I sell my self to my skin, I must go a long with my Husband to Oxford and have the opinnion of a surgon and a doctor both ; . . . and the chargis will be as great to me if I bring them hom to Fauler, to give them doble fees, and entertaynment by sides.'

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[1] There is a monument to their memory in the Church of South Weald in Essex.

The Doctor meanwhile was utilising the enforced leisure of a fever in a way he would have forbidden to any of his patients : he wrote of himself from his sick-room as 'an old, old, old man, with a bed-full of books.' In August, having shaken off his distemper and attended nephew Smith through a critical attack of illness, he is preparing to accompany Sir Ralph on a journey to Yorkshire about Mrs. Sherard's affairs. August 20, 1653 'Deare Ralph, Natt and Doll as they came upp in Alisbury coach were robbed on friday at noon day by 3 sparkes. Nat was the greatest loser for he lost 3 pounds in gold. Fælix quem faciunt aliena pericula *cautum.* I will carry none therefore, but will expect to be supplied by you and Mun. Expect me one day next weeke and Kate alsoe *flaut taut* [flaunting ?] with coach and 2 horses, therefore be sure your Byn be full, expect your sturgeon and venyson. I had gott the py plates and have paid for them but consulting with the learned minds I have sent to change them, soe you must wait till next weeke.' August 25, 1653 He is still too weak to ride, and he cannot go 'without a tumbrill or a Jumblinge Joanie. . . . I have 2 pittifull horses, but I hope Claydon Commons will batten them . . . it is high time to be at Yorke, therefore I pray pitch uppon Munday sennight to begin our march, that we may be there by Thursday night, because the Court sits only on Fridaies and Satterdaies. Be sure you have bottle beere to comfort my hart. . . . Expect a trunke and male and boxe and other lumber, which take care of at your perill. Commend me to Harry and tell him that if he had beene a right Brother of the Bridle, he would have given me a particular account of the Cupp at Brackley and especially of Mr. Winwood's horse.'

March 1653

His letters are generally full of Sir Ralph's money difficulties, but Dr. Denton sometimes appeals to him for help in his own. Mr. Mead has called upon him for a payment. 'The thinge is much out of my noddle,' and I cannot at present finde my papers to rectify my plumbrous cerebrosity, I pray rubb your cerebellum and looke out my notes and your papers and tell me the story and what I shall doe in it.' 'I will eyther pronge Mr. Mead till you come or get off for half, but I will tugge hard to come off, for nee pence noe pence.'

March 13, 1653

Sir Ralph has bought a mare of Dr. Denton which was a favourite of Nancy's. 'Madcapp saith though she sould you the mare, yett she did not sell you the colt, therefore she laies her commands on you, to midwife it out, and to tittle it upp and to bringe it with you in your coach, and then she will teach it all her Monkey tricks.'

In 1654 a case came on in the law courts between Sir Ralph and Lady Baltinglas about a rabbit warren and the authenticity of a title deed; Oct. 28, 1654 the busy Doctor made time to go and hear it. 'I was yesterday morninge att your triall, where you had a faire hearinge, and what the verdict will be I cannot tell, but my opinion is that if it goe for you, you have good luck, which was as neare as I could ghesse the sence both of the Barre and Bench. The point lay in a narrow compasse, viz: whether the Jury would beleeve that it was a warren before the patents of Edward and Henry; if they could have such a lusty faith, then the jury was to finde for your worshipp, but if infidells, and that it was founded in the memory of man, (as it was stoutly and I thinke truely sworne) then for your adversaries. More particulars I leave to William Roades,' who had come up to town to give evidence. The Doctor's forecast proved a true one; he writes on the 31st: 'I was att your great triall yesterday, and heard it all throughout; it lasted till past two in the afternoone, and Jury gave their verdict that night betimes, which was full and wholy for my Lady Baltinglas. The summe of the directions to the Jury was that if they found the Deed (by which Sir Ralph claimed) fraudulent, then all speciall verdicts and moote points were out of doores, and then all was hers, if not fraudulent then speciall verdicts but I heare the deed is found fraudulent and welcome gentlemen. I see Rolls is no favourer of fraudulent Conveyances against a purchaser. If you will come upp quickly whilst thinges are fresh in my head I will tell you more particulars. . . . Queen Katherine commands you to sett upp her wherry and make hast for she is in great want of you.'

Among the disastrous ventures undertaken by Sir Edmund Verney, he and his family had invested money in Vermuyden's scheme for draining the Fens. Dr. Denton's letters in 1654 and in the two following years refer to this business at intervals. 'I have not yet done with Mr. Vermuyden: the title is under consideration, which at best is like to be but an equitable one, yett I am soe fond of a good bargaine that I thinke we shall goe on.' 'Vermuyden and we treat still, this week or the beginninge of the next will I ghesse end it one way or other. . . . I will try if Mr. Vermuyden will treat farther, but I doubt I shall scarce part with mine; you know a foole will not leave his bauble for the Tower of London.' In the spring of 1656 the negotiations are still going on; 'I am in great Briars about Vermuyden, he will I find be made a Bankrupt within few daies.' 'I want your noddle here, for on Satterday next, I am like to be a man or a mouse in Vermuyden's affaire whose land will be exposed for sale for non payment of taxes and what to doe in it I know not in point of purchase or not purchase. . . .'

March 1654

March 16, 1654

Jan. 24, 1656

Sir Ralph replies: 'To D^r^ about his Fen.' 'I see you are in some trouble about Vermuyden's

Jan. 27, 1656

businesse. I know not what to say to it for if you purchasse of those that sell it for non payment of Taxes, perhaps it may mount high, and the title may bee subject to a chancery suite, and I doubt y^e Comissioners will either teare the land from you, or make others sharers with you (for doubtless hee may bee made a Bankrupt), and if you purchasse not, I feare who ever else buys it, will mumpe you of it too. Cañot Cozen Smith shew him a Trick for his Trick ? Some hold it noe deceipt, to deceive a deceiver. Well, you understand it best, and can best judge of it and what is fittest to bee donn ; if you resolve to purchasse you may pawne both mee, and Claydon too, to whome you please, and I will come upp to Squeeze at a days warning ; . . . hold upp your finger, and I come. I long to heare how matters went with you.' The doctor writes from Cambridge in June : 'About my fenne concerne, I would fayne know as soone, and as much as I can, for I am weary already of this turfey aire and smell. . . . If the Vermuydens' minds be known at your receipt of this . . . I pray lett me know it, with order to M^r Best to send a messenger on purpose to me with my lettars, if it be not knowne then by Ely carriour, whose name is Barkham & Inns att the Bull in Bisshop'gate street. He comes in on Thursdaies & goes out on Fridaies ; direct to me there [Ely] at the Bell where I intend to stay till Munday next.' 'Hearinge nothinge from that monster of men, that is all tounge & noe hands to write, nor feet to walk

June 30, 1656

hither, I take it for granted that there is nothinge to be done with Vermuyden, by which meanes, I am putt uppon a great straight for present money, & that a good summe . . . the Croppe is downe & will be lost if I gett not money presently . . . I have bought a coach mare here.' After receiving Sir Ralph's answer he writes again: 'I cannot justly say what pennies I shall want as yett till I see what Vermuyden will doe, but I ghesse 200*l.* besides what you owe will be the least.' He speaks of 'the great importunity of my Ladie Vermuyden late that night, not to passe any estate till uppon another treaty with me.' 'I was on Friday with my Lord Deputy [Fleetwood] about the Fens. I offered him the Cole seeds for 5,300*l.*, but there's not a 1*d.* of money to be had, and Vermuyden doth nothing but Juggle, and I must be content to loose it every seed, soe I thinke to fall on the bones of father and sonne.' 'At our Fenn Clubb last night (which is every Wenesday evenings), we have certain intelligence from Mr. Gorge our superintendent (for which he hath 500*l.* per annum and is on the place), that the waters run 18 inches under soyle, there's a Rowland for your Oliver. I have otherwise conveyed the Fenns and sold them to Mun [Denton] and taken his bond for 2,000*l.* and noe trust exprest betweene us.' 'Raph Verney, Sir, my humble Duty remembered to you. An Epistolary preface, not I confesse al mode de France mais de Fenns, such a learned office have I now gott there, but lett

July 10, 1656

July 13, 1656

Nov. 13, 1656

Feb. 26, 1657

that passe. . . . I am sorry you were disappointed of pennies, A precious Commodity here, & much wanted here of all. I bought on Wednesday 400 Acres more of Fenland for 300*l.* It was sold for non payment of taxes by the Adventurers, & I must borrow all the money to pay for it.'

March 5, 1657 Dr. Denton speaks again of the land he had bought and sold in the Fens, from Mr. Stanley and Mr. Crave, and how he has lost on each transaction, though he 'had it double and treble in highe acknowledgements, fine ayry things.' July 4, 1657 'My Lord Fleetwood assaults me might & maine for Vermuyden, all the engines he could mount hath not yett removed me from my old Basis & resolution of a Release first & there wee stick at present.' 'I want you here grievously to goe with me to my L^d^ Deputy who alwaies hath Sir John Pettus to assist him.' August 27, 1656 'I never had more need of a Vulpone[1] then in this affair.' Dr. Denton's appeal to Fleetwood had not, however, been in vain. July 20, 1657 'I have gott Vermuyden's lease,' he writes, 'my Lord Deputy ended it, but soe contrary to young Vermuyden's mind, that my Lord sent the next day to have had it againe. Butt its enrolled & I am going to fetch it from thence, & I desired his excuse soe I hope I and mine may be quiett.'

In August 1657 'Vermuyden still plaies his tricks, but 'he hath a cur by the eares'; the Doctor wonders that 'Never soe many Artifices, traps and snares,' should be 'used to catch a simple phismicary, and yett he walks alone & upright.'

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[1] 'To the King's house, there to see *Vulpone* (Ben Jonson's comedy), a most excellent play, the best, I think, I ever saw.'—*Pepys' Diary*, Jan. 14, 1665.

The Doctor, not having enough to do, turned his attention to farming his Fenlands. He finds the Fens in October 1658 less sickly than the high country. 'I doubt whether I have any oats (though my next neighbours have) so good as to yeeld 17^s a quarter; they are to make oatmell. My man told me I had 60 load well ended . . . I can hardly be reasoned out of a dayry, I am sure that must yeeld somethinge every day Any other way of mannaginge of it I must run the hazard of a foole & a knave & this way I only hazard the knave, & if I can gett him that I am about, I shall be very confident of his honesty.' 'Accordinge to what Brassit made for himselfe by his owne confession & by demonstration, 5 Cowes made in 2 daies 15 lbs of cheese which he sold for 4^d the lb. which is 6^d per diem a Cow, besides the advantage of whay, & what was taken in the house, which must make 12^s or 20^s an acre rent. I know you would be glad to be rid of some of your poore tenants, & if you have any that are honest & industrious, I will stock them at my charge with 10 or 20 Cowes, soe they will give me 2^s a Cowe a weeke, but I beleeve, I might gett reasonable well at 18^d the week & soe my man hath profered mee.'

But even Dr. Denton's energy could not suffice to carry on a dairy business in the Fens, and a town practice at the same moment, and after a short experience of both he was obliged to own that he was as weary as could be of 'stockinge and plowinge & daryinge,' and that if he could get others to rent his cows 'they shall dary & not I.' 'Queen Katherine' complains at intervals that 'the Doctor is gon to the Fenes, to try if he can get another ague.'

In the autumn of 1654, and during the greater part of 1655, Dr. Denton and Sir Ralph had a family sorrow and anxiety which touched both of them nearly. Of all those who had suffered in the Verney family by the disruption of home ties, perhaps Sir Edmund's younger girls, Mary and Betty, were the most to be pitied. Without the careful training of their parents, or the advantages of education and society which their elder sisters had enjoyed, they had grown up in such unsettled and troublous times that the shelter of his roof and the protection of their mother's housekeeper was all that their elder brother could give them during his exile. His wife was inclined to regard them with some severity; their ceaseless and thoughtless demands upon their brother roused her displeasure, and the want of breeding and refinement, which was their worst misfortune, offended her taste and her high standard of decorum. Mary she described as the plainest of the six girls, and 'extream clownish,' but with a good deal of cleverness and good-nature. The married sisters did their best for them, but Pen was too poor, and Margaret's husband too ill-tempered, to entertain them long. They stayed with Cary Gardiner, and at Claydon after Sir Ralph's return, though he refused to let them live with him altogether, as he was going up and down to his bachelor lodgings in London, and he wished his sisters to be under the care of an older woman. He had been diligently corresponding with various friends about marriages for them, but up to this time with indifferent success.

'Cary hopes to match Moll to one about 50; his wife was Lady Ayres who died last yeare. Cary told him Sir Ralph would allow Mall £60 p^{r} annum during her life.' But this not very attractive match had fallen through. Mary had lived to the age of five-and-twenty without being specially necessary to any-one, she was perpetually scolded and admonished, little sympathised with or understood. We learn, therefore, with less wonder and indignation than her relations did, and more of sorrowing pity, that she loved 'not wisely but too well' the first man who singled her out for love and admiration. Mary had been ailing, and the Doctor, with the kindness he always showed to his sister's children, invited her to his house in London. The visit was a long one, and Sir Ralph received accounts of her health from the Doctor, from Mr. Gape, and from Robert Lloyd, who was on a footing of friendship and intimacy in both houses. She was undergoing the severe medical treatment then in fashion; Dr. Denton writes: 'Mall began to speake about 2 of the clock on

Oct. 9, 1651

Jan. 19, 1654

Thursday morning and is bettar than she was; she hath not yett the command of opening her mouth, but lispeth in her speech and if a little gagge (which she keepes betweene her teeth) slip out, she hath much ado to open her mouth againe.' She recovered from this sickness, but as time went on Dr. Denton became uneasy as to the cause of Mary's continued ill-health and depression of spirits, and it was doubly painful to him to reflect that her acquaintance with Robert Lloyd had been formed under his own roof. The Doctor did his best to shelter the unfortunate girl, and to keep her secret, but he was in grave anxiety about it. An Act of great severity had recently been passed, by which Mary, as she well knew, was liable to public exposure and imprisonment, and trials for such offences were actually going on at that time. Katherine Denton and Mary Gape, who seem to have been substantially kind to her, were the last women from whom reticence could be expected. The anxious Doctor writes to Sir Ralph: Nov. 9, 1654 'The ugly affaire multiplies new occasions of sorrow and mischiefe, wherein I have none of the least share, it soe unhappily fallinge out that those that have had relation to me should be both the occasion and trumpeters of it. It is now fallen into as ill a mouth as spite could have placed it, and it makes mee at my witt's end to thinke of it. I wish you had beene here sooner that if possible we might have thought of some new contrivance to have posted her away. . . . I cannot imagine what can be done.' Various plans were discussed for Mary to go to Ireland, and even to 'the Barbadoes,' but eventually a quiet lodging was found for her in London, where Dr. Denton and the Gapes looked after her, and Sir Ralph paid her expenses. Her sisters, who were deeply shocked and pained, were harsh and angry, and Tom and Henry were loud in condemning her ; Tom was at the same time blustering about his determination to vindicate his sister's honour, when the only service he could render her was to hold his tongue. Sir Ralph was kinder and more considerate ; he did not find Moll easy to manage ; she was too unhappy to be reasonable ; but she showed some courage and resolution. 'The best I can expect,' she wrote to Sir Ralph, 'is to be brought in to a very low condisshon . . . but I have a harte that will gooe throw a grett dell of paine ; I am in hoope that I may over come it all ; it will ether mende mee or ende mee.' On her recovery she was anxious to assert her independence. Mr. Gape wrote : March 22, 1655 'Shee pretends now att this extremity to serve a lady and sayth she hath a place ready. I tell her when shee knowes y^e misery and hardship of service shee will better value a brother's affection. She sayth shee cannot live without R. what ever shee endures. I asked her how could shee enjoy him in service. Shee sayth it shall bee a place where shee may often see and hear from him.' Dr. Denton was always pleading her cause with Sir Ralph, but he thought Mary had no right after his past kindness 'to rant and stand upon termes.' 'I have some thoughts of visiting her,' he wrote, 'to give her a rattle for her rant, but am not yett resolved.'

Poor Mary found the bread of dependence quite as bitter as the apothecary had foretold, and she soon appealed to Sir Ralph again: 'Brother tell now I nevir knew what it was to earne my Leving but now I doe, for I have not hade a bitt to eate tell I have worckeded furst for it. . . . Brother as I have desarved harde youseg [usage] so I have receved. . . . Now my earnest request to you is that you will please to lett mee know whether you will alow mee a Lively hoode or no. . . . I hade not a shue to ware tell I did earne a pare. . . . I know some that dooe dailey eatte at y^r tabell have as Ill desarved y^r relefe as I have, and in theare carieg have binne as onworthy, but they have fownde more frindeshipe then I can; Bro: you hade dellt more charatabeller with mee to a layed the exstremitey of the law againest mee att the fust, then to a releveded mee for the present and to suffer mee to starve now. . . . Good Brother doo by mee as if you ware In want you woulde be dellte by; for thoues that will not show marcey most exspetke non, and thoues that will not for give will never bee forgeven, and thoues that doo Leade there Lives best, doo neede marcey and forgiveness, so I hope you will dealle by mee as you desier god will dealle by you and yours.' 'If you will not please to relive mee I most to Claydon, and if I doo periesh it shalle bee att your dooare . . . for I cannot Live by the are. . . . I am confieydent that

April 11, 1655

May 1655

your doges eatte that as I would be glade of.' Sir Ralph gave her the allowance she asked for.

Mary Verney and Robert Lloyd were married on November 2, 1655, 'in Paddington Church by Anthony Dod the Minister,' and the later chapters of her life, so far as we know them, were better and happier than this early one.

We have another glimpse of the Doctor's home life, in 1658. He was suddenly attacked with illness in the beginning of March; his wife was terribly alarmed and wrote, as everybody else did in trouble, to desire Sir Ralph to come to her immediately. 'It is now 3 of the Clocke in the morning and I have bin up all this night with the D^{r}. he hath had a most violent fitt and sick unto Death and burns like any fire, and what will itt come to, the Lorde he knoweth. To have him thus sicke and noe freinds about mee, makes mee att my witts end to know which way to turne my selfe; therefore I shall begg the favour of you that you will come to mee; for he is so unable to beare this Illnesse, that I feare it may come to a worse effect.' The letter was sent from London to Middle Claydon addressed 'I pray send this away with all the Speed you can'; it arrived 'neare 11 at night,' some 18 hours after its despatch. Sir Ralph was of course greatly disturbed, but before he could reach town the acute symptoms had subsided, and the Doctor was rating his wife soundly for troubling him, 'very small matters putt her beyond her sences, & you

March 5, 1658

are not to obey her in those cases . . . you have oblidged me by your readines . . . of which I was as well satisfied before, but I doe not love to give trouble unnecessarily for it was plainely an agew.' As soon as he was a little better he was quite beyond 'Queen Katherine's' control ; he had '5 fitts' but he would 'go abrode every day, his fitt days & all others alike'; he was attending Lady Fairfax daily, 'who is now upon the recovery'; and to Sir Ralph's anxious remonstrances he would only reply 'my agew is gone, God make me thankful . . . when you have obeyed my wife as longe as I have done, you may then learne to be wiser.'

CHAPTER VII.

SIR RALPH CROSSES CROMWELL'S PATH.

1654–1655.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
  Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
  That for a hermitage.—LOVELACE.

SIR RALPH felt but little sympathy with the members whom Cromwell ejected from the House of Commons in April 1653; he had neither forgiven nor forgotten his own expulsion—indeed, the Long Parliament, which he and his father had entered with such high hopes in 1640, had dwindled to a remnant; 'there were none to praise, and very few to love.'

July 11, 1653 Sir Roger makes merry over its successor, 'the supreme Authority now named a Parliament,' and Sir Ralph writes to Cousin Spencer of its doom: Dec. 16, 1653 'Our famous Parl: being conscious of theire owne weaknesse dissolved them selves (because they could not helpe it) the Major part then present went with theire Speaker to White Hall, & there by a Wrighting resigned up their authority into the Generall's hands, who questionlesse will make far better use of it than they have donn. Some of them were willing to sit longer, but they could not, as the reste were not of theire minde. What way of government shall bee now prescribed, is not yet knowne, some talk of a counsell of 10, others of 21, and a Lord protector who shall have a Negative Voyce, but all these are yet guesses, for we have noe Declaration, nor know any thing certainely more then the counsell of officers, sit constantly & long, soe that there is greate hope of a speedy and a better settlement.'

Dr. Denton writes the next summer in the midst of the excitement caused by the execution of Don Pantaleone Sa for the murder of a citizen. 'The Portugall Embassador tooke pett, the same day his Brother was beheaded and went to Graves Ende without taking any leave of the Protector.'

July 20, 1654

But while maintaining the honour of England against foreign powers the Protector was exposed to plots at home worthy of modern anarchists; Charles being not ashamed to offer a great reward to anyone who should kill 'a certain mechanic fellow, by name Oliver Cromwell, by pistol, sword, or poison.' The extreme republicans threatened danger from the opposite side of the political compass, and in his failure to get a parliament to work with him Cromwell, who of all men was most anxious to sheathe the sword, and return to constitutional methods, was driven back upon a purely military government. England was divided into eleven districts under as many major-generals, who exercised police jurisdiction and levied a 10-per-cent. tax on the fortunes of all who had served the King, to pay the expense of keeping order. Bucks was under the command of the 'Lord Deputy' Charles Fleetwood. Sir Ralph writes: 'I confess I love Old England very well, but as things are carried heere the gentry cannot joy much to bee in it.' Colonel Henry Verney's letters during 1654 and 1655 are a curious contrast to his brother's: 'the gentry' that he lived amongst cared little for politics, but endeavoured by hunting, racing, and gambling to relieve the dulness of the Puritan rule, and Cromwell's son and son-in-law seem to have been amongst them. Henry is visiting 'my Lady Cuttings at Tustinge,' and at 'Sir Richard Shugboroughs, a good friend's house.' He writes to his brother from Thrusten': 'I cannot send you any newse, more then what company came here, the last night unexpected, to hunt the fox for a weeke. My Lord Cro'well [query Richard Cromwell], my Lord Claypole, my Lord Sands, my Lord Deleware, Sir William Kingsmill, Sir Hue Middleton, and divers other gentlemen. It is soe darke that I cannot see to write a word more, then to tell you, wee keepe ill hours, and lead a lude life, which is noe way pleasinge to me.' 'Tell Harry,' writes Dr. Denton, 'he had better keepe his money and lay it out on some of my Lord Duke [of Richmond]'s horses, then loose it to fooles and bunglers.' Feb. 1655 April 2, 1655

When Sir Ralph is in the thick of his political troubles and anxieties, Henry is on a round of visits. He writes how cousin Smith 'would not let mee Aug. 13, 1655 wagg, but must stay to keepe Mr. Haile company (though logdinge is Pretious). . . . He is like to have his house and stables full for neare this 3 mounths as I doe heare, for what with the six coach horses, and outher naggs, and doggs it is well fill'd.'

'I have bine att Stowe neere this weeke, and have waighted on S^r Richard daley to the forrest, and had good sport, but ill fortune with my dogg Hector, for the first course a did run their, a was spoyld in a battle with a bucke, never dogg gott more credit, the combate held neare halfe an hower, afore 20 of us, and all we could doe, could neither save dog nor kill the deare, though wee had severall times hold of him, it was forty to one I had not let out S^r Richards gutts, loosinge his hold att his hornes, my lord Claypoll seeinge the mettle & greate couradge the dog had after recevinge five stuck deepe wounds, would not bee deney'd the dog to breede one, soe, much against my will, I was forst to present him, by his lordship's surgons greate care the dog may live to run againe, his greateness is more fond of him than ever I was, which does not a little please me.' Three weeks later he writes again: 'Our huntinge att the forrest is now done, and his lordshipp gone, and my dogg Hector like to doe well again, S^r William Farmer att the killinge of his three staggs entertainde the whole company for tow dayes noblely, I dare say it cost him att the lest £100. . . My cousin Smith treated his honour att a dinner hansomely; feastinge of late I have had plentifully but never hartely merey for want of your company.' Aunt Isham, though she dearly loves a little gambling, is quite worn out ; Henry made them so late every night at Hillesden ; 'he will never give one over as Longe as one is able to sit up.' Sir Ralph had presented her with 'a paire of sable Brasletts, for you may weare them at Play, which you cannot doe your muffe, and these may possibly save you from many colds this winter.'

Sir Ralph was in more congenial society : he paid a quiet visit in August 1654 to his devoted friends Vere, Lady Gawdy, and Dorothy Leeke who was installed as her companion, at Croweshall. He and Sir Nathaniel Hobart travelled back together and had many misadventures by the way, but as Sir Nathaniel has sent 'the whole story to my Lady,' writes Sir Ralph to Doll, 'for me to undertake it after him, were farre worse then to write Myrza after Denham.'[1] Sweet Doll, to whom Claydon had been such a happy home in the old days, might not have been unwilling to fill the vacant chair on the other side the fire. They were on the old happy terms of intimacy, but Sir Ralph's letters probably meant more to the woman who received them, than to the man who wrote them, and through all her banter there runs a vein of tender and pathetic sentiment.

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[1] Mirza was the hero of Sir John Denham's play of *The Sophy*, 'acted at the Private House, in Blackfriars, by His Majesty's servants' in 1641, when Sir Ralph and Lady Gawdy had doubtless seen it. The piece was so much admired that Waller said of the author : 'He broke out like the Irish rebellion, threescore thousand strong, when nobody was aware, or in the least suspected it.'

'If I could quarrel with you for anything,' he wrote to Doll after his visit to Croweshall, 'it should bee for the compliments in your letter. I thought you had knowne me and loved me better, than to use me with soe much cerimony. I pray let your next bee in a more friendly straine.' ''Tis now the new fashion for Maydens in town to ride a Pick Pack; you ever loved to follow the mode. I wish you would try it now to Claydon or if you like any other way better take your owne choyce, please your selfe, for soe you come, you shall most certainly please mee.' 'I know your old deare friend Mr. London,' he writes again, 'findes you such a variety of entertainements that you have not leasure to cast your thoughts on Claydon, but least I should be quite forgot, give these lines leave to visit you in my absence. . . . I now meant to have writ to Cozen Hobart but church is halfe done already, therfore I must needes intreate you to beg her pardon for me.'

May 31, 1655

Jan. 27, 1656

April 23, 1656

'Consider what you have lost,' Doll writes of the marriage of an heiress, 'for not asking the question . . . but you are difficult to be plesed and it must be half don before you speak, I pray let me court your mistres (I will make a journy a pourpos) I know your yumur so well, that I have no fear but to pleas you . . . you could not have spent your time more charitably if I may be your judg, then in righting a letter of so much variety to me, it hath much revived my sperits, the lose of your company & the rest of my frinds hath made me to retire into my self, thus I have spent much of my time in thought . . . but I resolve to forget you all & get out of this ugly yumur, for fear I grow lean. The hope of Aunt Verney's legesy made me think of an other jorney to Loundon, that I might spend it hansomly, but senc she meanes to live, I am not without fear that you may supplant me in hir favor.'

April 28, 1656

'Sweet Cozen,' he replies, 'your request is granted, when I come at a Mistris, you shall court her for me ; noe person that I know can doe it with more addresse & cuning, and I am sure you love your friendes soe well, that (haveing undertaken it) you will performe it with noe less fidelity then affection. But, alas, the maine thing, A Mistris is yet wanting, I have been fumbling soe many yeares with soe ill successe, that unlesse you find one out, I am not like to speed in that ; therfore I pray thinke well of it, and assure your selfe, if she bee but rich enough, & old enough she canot but bee wise enough and good enough for me.'

Doll pays him back his jest with spirit. 'The character you have given me of your Mistris, assures me that you will not ingadj me, only you resovle to be sivell, and I will be so to ; and leave you to your one chois, with this wish that you may be as happi as you deserve.' If the cruel adjective 'rich' seemed purposely to exclude herself, Doll had at least the consolation of seeing that the wealthy and charming widow Dame Vere Gawdy did not advance a step nearer to the position which, as her friends believed, she also felt herself eminently qualified to adorn.

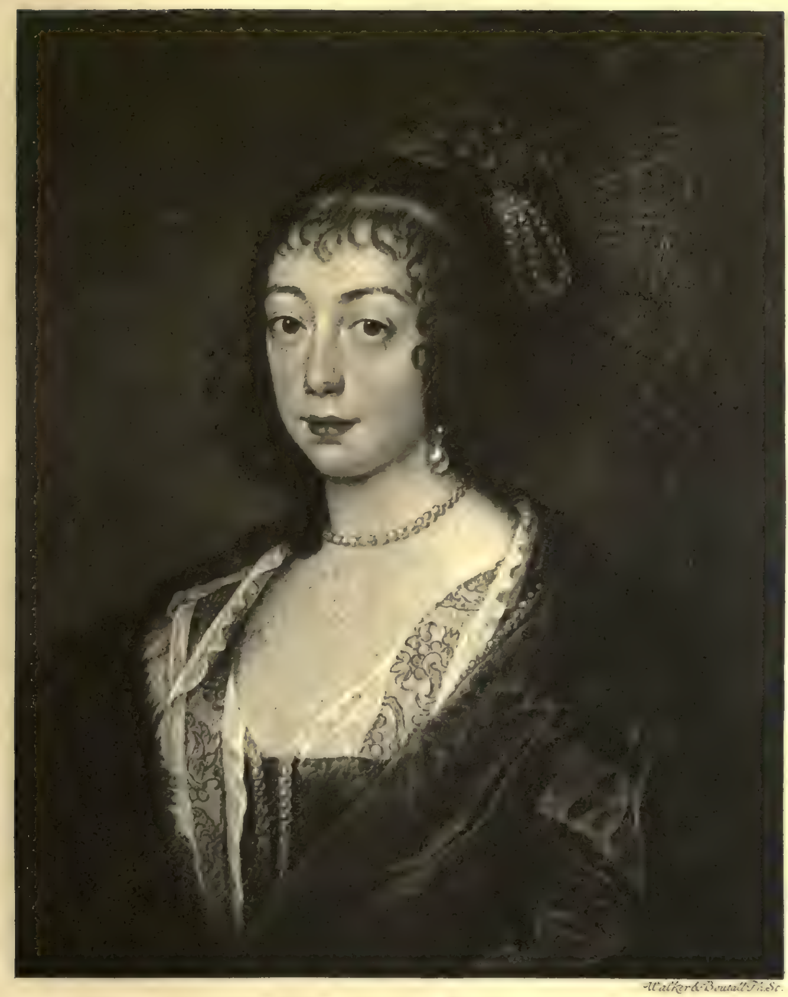
Sir Ralph's most finished and elaborate compliments are reserved for his letters to Lady Gawdy, and she is not to be outdone in civilities, though she may lament that she can only express herself 'so exactly like a Suffolke Cloune . . . yet in my harte,' she says, 'you shall bee treated as I would bee in heaven.' Her love of building makes Croweshall 'as durty as Claydon without dors,' and Doll assures Sir Ralph that he may fancy himself 'at home in earnest'; he sends Lady Gawdy all kinds of plants, from watercress to 'cedar berries,' hoping she may live to see the cedars out-top her tallest oaks.

'Sir, I kis your hands for the Seders, your favour only can make this place capable of such greatnes, but if they should not prosper they will mis of so gratefull a Soile as the harte of, sir, your obleged humble sarvant, Vere Gawdy.'

Lady Gawdy's fortune and her expectations were the subject of many merry letters between them.

Sept. 3, 1655

'Madame, give me leave I beseech you, to give you joy of the greate Wealth thats coming towards you; in earnest you are now thought one of the Richest Widdowes in England, for since the Death of Lady Clerke, we heare Mrs. Daniell hath publiquely declared she hath none but you and Yours to care for. Were I now at Liberty I would make suite to bee your cash keeper, however if your Baggs are rotten with rusty gold or not bigg enough to hold it all, let me but know it, and a Dozen or two of Leather Meale Baggs shall be immediately



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Vere Gawdy

from a painting at Claydon House.

provided, and sent downe by, Madame, Your humble servant.'

'Sir,' replies the lady, 'I doe experiment the fallshood of fame severely, for if the kindness of the parson did answer the report, twould bee noe difficulty to inclose my welth in the crasiest bags I have, & if it were exposed to vew I should not neede a gaurd to secure it; the esteme of my freinds is A welth I only covitt, and your selfe may assure a most vallewable share of it to Sir, Your most obleged sarvant, VERE GAWDY.'

On the other hand it was one of Sir Ralph's constantly recurring duties to find safe investments for Doll's modest savings. 'If Sir Richard Temple will morgage Land for soe small a summe,' he writes, 'I beleeve it may bee good security. . . . Lawyers are the propper and indeed the only judges of matters concerning Titles, but of the integrity of those with whome you deale, you or I, perhapps may know as much as they. Had I money of my own to Lend, the cheifest thing that I should looke uppon, should bee the honour, & honesty of the Person to whome I lent it, for beleeve me Cosen, the silliest soule, that will allow himselfe to play the knave, may easily cheate the craftiest Councellour about the Towne. Dick Winwood & Jack Dormer are borrowers of Money, but give noe Land security, unlesse for greater summs then yours, had either of them any money of mine, I should think it as well-placed as with the Mayor and all the Aldermen of London.' June 25, 1657

There was a report early in 1655 that Sir Ralph had been arrested, and Dr. Denton writes: 'This is to lett you know that you are in the tower, gett out as well as you can, Verney for Vernham hath caused the rumor & mistake.' 'Here is newes more than is true in abundance. That that is most generally received is that S^r Joseph Wagstaffe cum multis aliis is up in the West, seized Judge Rolls & others & all theire horses & money at Salisbury. That S^r Richard Mauleverer is upp in the north & endeavoured the seizinge of York Castle etc. There is much talking of risinge in divers other countries w^ch I had rather beleeve then goe to see. . . . I ghesse there will be a generall settlement of the militia in all counties, & a generall securinge, & though I dare be a compurgator for Claydon & Hillesdon & Ratley that you have neyther head nor purse in the rebellious designe, yett the names are malignant & that will goe far in prudence. Verbum sapienti sat: tell Mun so much, Vale.' 'I heare the rebell cavaliers are defeated in the West, some kild, some taken, & not many left togeather.' . . . 'Thorpe, Glyn, & Steele are to goe westward to try the late Rebells; Pen Ruddock & the Jones, are come to towne to be tryed or examined or what you please.'

Jan. 18, 1655

March 15 and 17, 1655

March 24, 1655

April 5, 1655

In the midst of these public anxieties the trees that Sir Ralph had ordered from Holland kept arriving. Dr. Denton writes: 'I wish y^u had beene behind the hangings just now to heare the Romance,

March 22, 1655

Lady Gaudey, Doll, & I made, they of their trees & I of my trees. They writt last night but 13 letters about them, & scolded betweene whiles to boot, & all for feare of miscarriage & disappointm^{t} & I gave them a Rowland for their Oliver, & summe was you must pay for all our follies, & soe we might be merry the cheaper.' 'I do not see how it was possible the trees [should] escape bruisinge. They were too bigge to be bound up in any number. They were brought over single, & amongst bottles, a layer of trees & a layer of bottles (which would not defend them over warily) the shipping & unshipping & often loading & unloading of them must of necessity bruise them very much. I hope the Abeele trees will make you an amends.' Their arrival at Claydon is delayed and Sir Ralph writes: The 'advertisement came in pudding-time,[1] for to morrow the cart was to set forwards but upon this I have stayed it till Monday.' April 2, 1655

Many of Sir Ralph's friends were supporting the Government: Fiennes had been made Lord Keeper, Sir Roger wished for a place as Groom of the Stole, Nat. Hobart was hoping for a Mastership in Chancery, and Sir Richard Temple for a place in the 'Protector's Court.' He also talked of going to Jamaica, but this came to nothing, as Dr. Denton had foreseen. 'Sir Rich: Temple's purport of goinge for gold is 1,000 times bettar than holdinge of a trenchar, but I doubt he loves sleepinge in a whole skin to well to goe that iourney.'

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[1] *I.e.* in the nick of time.

'When George in pudding-time came o'er
And moderate men looked big.'—*The Vicar of Bray.*

Penelope Denton was in bitter trouble. A lawsuit was pending between her husband and his mother. Sir Ralph took infinite trouble about it for Pen's sake only, as he thought 'The Squire' 'a beast.' In March John Denton is in prison at the Castle in Oxford for debt, and Pen is 'almost brought to deths dore : . . . this 3 days I have not eate more then a mess of milk & a negg ; my one seller beare is to strong for me to drink. I must sell myself to my sking, goods & all to defray this great chargis.' . . . 'The sheriff & gaolers' fees cost 8 or 10*l*. & their 2 cows have to be sold.' 'Brother no creatur that beggs from dore to dore can live in A mener condishtion then I do. Had my Good father or mother A Lived I am confident it would A greved there harts to a sene or hard of my greate strats.'

March 16, 1655

April 6, 1655

A man-servant of John Denton's was 'a great vilin,' Pen writes, '& had sayd that of me to his master that he could not mak good. The good lady at Ditchley & Sir Harry & his Lady was with me when I was ill, & I did one [own] soe much trouble to my Lady, which was no more then my looks did betray me in ; that both herself & Sir Harry did tak upon them to tell my husband that if he did not kick the fellow out of dors, no gentilman but would scorne to keep him company, thos words of those parsons did work so much upon my husband that with my paying him his hold years wages, I thank God he is gon from us both.'

While Sir Ralph was about Pen's affairs an urgent request came from Cary that he would stand godfather to an expected baby, early in April, as she would 'unwillingly kepe a child long unbaptized.' John Stewkeley, who desired a man's society during his 'gander-month,' wrote heartlessly: 'S^r^, My Lady. . . . & I are ambitious of y^r^ Company here this spring, that you may observe the melody her crying out, & the singing of the Nitingale will make together . . . shee will earnestly expect your coming, which will bee noe less acceptable to her then the midwife; I desire you would bring my namesake, the Winton Scholler [one of his own boys] will bee proud of his aquaintance. If you have not better Conveniency, here are choice of Coaches now, for the South hampton Coachman hath sett up another one w^th^ 6 horses, by Hoburn bridge, at the Rose or King's Armes . . . there is another sett up lately in Winchester.' Sir Ralph promised to be with them, but when John Stewkeley wrote to announce the birth of a girl 'which after 2 boyes is very acceptable,' he was still detained by the Dentons' lawsuit. 'One side is soe needy that a little will not serve theire turne; & the other side is so hide bound that they will part with nothing thats considerable. Pen is soe importunate & passionate for my stay, that I know not how to leave her at this nick of time,' wrote Sir Ralph, willing to disoblige the sister he

Feb. 26, 1655

loved best, rather than abandon the one most uncongenial to him in her time of need. He therefore appealed to Aunt Isham at Preshaw to be his proxy. May 18, 1655 'Heertofore you know you have worne Breeches for mee, & now if you please to put them on againe & christen my little neece, I shall take it for a very greate favour.' May 23, 1655 'All though I be not so youthfull as I was hearetofor,' she replied, 'to put one Briches, yett I have my Husbonde heare as shall be att youre sarvis, and this will be the seconde time as he is to Ancere for you, & you can doe noe lese then say as the Papeses used to say to one the other: Say so many Prayeres for me today, & I will say as many for you tomorroe.' She pretends to think that another cause keeps him in town. 'Now for your widderes. . . . I say to you be grave & wise, & doe not lett these Riche widdows floter so aboute you, chache none of them. Thus we could be mery if we met att many thinges, but now I must ende againste my seckes thinking as nothing will satisfies us but our one will.'

In the same merry vein, but with real regret, John Stewkeley wrote: 'Though your letter began comically . . . yet the consequence was tragicall & produced sad effects in your sisters, for itt putt them into such a fitt of weeping, that seriously the suddain news of a Dying freend could not bee attended with greater lamentation. . . . Had you consulted with your charity it would have prevailed above those magick spells, & prevented the shedding of those tears . . . or had you consulted with your honour, it would sure have brought you hither after so many engagements under your hand to performe a christian duty . . . it hath cast a suddain dampe on the mirth wee all had here, being elevated with the daily hope of seeing you ; therefore I must now invert my usuall expression of being not only your passionately affectionate, but your affectionately passionate brother & serv^t Joh : Stewkely.'

Sir Ralph had sufficient sense of humour to enjoy his own jokes, but it seldom reached to those of other people. He was detained in town, partly by Cary's own affairs, for he was trying to get the jointure to which she was entitled from Cuddesdon out of her mother-in-law, old Lady Gardiner, almost as tough a customer as the Denton dowager. He was tired and harassed ; the jeers about fluttering widows seemed very ill-timed, and he wrote back with less than his usual courtesy and sweet temper. 'I thought it utterly impossible my kindnesse, charity & honour should all be caled in question for doeing that which (being well considered) could neither in kindnesse, charity nor honour bee well declined. . . . I shall take heed how I engage myselfe in any businesse but my owne : & therefore I have now sent all the Papers about Cudsdon to the Sollicitour . . . least if heerafter any other sister should send for mee, I might not bee at Liberty to attend, & therby (though very undeservedly) occation a new action of unkindnesse to be brought against me.' May 25, 1655

Happily, he was too much beloved at Preshaw for his letter to give offence. John Stewkely apologised handsomely, and said that 'his wife's grief had been such that a gentlewoman told him . . . that of her knowledge a Lady died of noe other sickness.'

The plots and the arrests continued ; Mrs. Isham writes: 'Moste of our Gentre is secured and took to Oxford. S^r Jhon: Bire Lase [Borlase], Lord Loues [?], Lord Folkle : [? Falkland] att Ox. all : ; Lorde Linesay thay have bine with, but the Lorde Camdine comeing a suter to his Dafter he is Lett alone a while, and whate to thinke of my Hus : I knowe not, Nothing they can have against him I knowe and wheather I had best sende him out of the way I know not, for none knowes whate these be had away for, itt may be all your cases. . . . My cays [keys] be all loste & I have no more paper.' June 1655

Mun is clamouring to return to England, to which he feels himself quite a stranger, he is at the Hague with good introductions, having wound up with Dr. Creighton. Sir Ralph answers him in a severe mood. 'I have now received yours & in it a direction for my letters to you, but soe lame & soe ill English & nonesence that I am ashamed to write it. "For M^r Edmund Verney at M^r Bates in the signe of the Samson in die Pots in den Hagh." You should have said "At M^r Bates his House or Shopp or Lodging," or some such like place, or tis not good English. Secondly In the signe of the Sampson is nonsence, it should have beene At the Signe ; your very French June 11, 1655

Phrase might teach you to write better sence, and English too, but that you are soe carelesse that you minde nothing. Tis noe less a wonder then a trouble to me to see that at neare nineteen yeares of age (though noe care, nor cost hath beene wanting for your Breeding) you are not yet able to write a superscription of a letter. For shame, bee not still thus childish. . . . You are very much obliged to S^r Charles Cotterell for assisting you in buying your things : I hope you will bee advised by him, & endeavour to imitate him, for hee is a very sober discrett person.'

June 15, 1655

Two days after this precise letter was penned, in midst of his quiet and useful life at Claydon, Sir Ralph was suddenly arrested as a suspected Royalist on June 13, 1655, by the Lord Protector's soldiers. His next letter to Edmund tells the story :—' Yours of $\frac{18}{8}$ June I received this very evening at London being just now brought Prisoner to Towne with divers Lords and other persons of quallity, for wee know not what ; our owne innocence is a Protection that canot be taken from us ; had you been heere, you had certainly beene in Prison too, for they tooke both father and sonn in many places, and though I must confesse the Soldiers that tooke me at Claydon on Wednesday last, used me very civilly, yet they tooke all the Pistolls, & Swords in the house, & carried me to Northampton that very night, and the next morning (though 'twas a fast[1]) made us goe to

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[1] Probably the day of intercession for the persecuted Protestants of Piedmont.

Brickill, & this night they brought us heather. What shall be donn with us, and that multitude of Gentry that is secured in every county, wee canot yet imagen, but I am glad with all my hart you were not heere, for you are yet unacquainted with the great charge, trouble, and inconveniences of a Prison, and I hope the times will grow so quiet that you may enjoy your freedome better then wee have donn. I pray husband your money as well as possibly you can, for these are not only very troublesome, but chargable times, and though I am willing to suffer first, yet if this contineu, you must thinke to suffer too.'

The shock was great to everyone at Claydon. Will Roades tried to get another interview with his master. 'I was at Northamton, but cam to late to speak with you there,' he writes, 'but I hop in God to see your Saffe Return, and for afflicktions whille we live in this vaille of miserey must continually be loocked for, but yf you souffer afflicktions heere for Righteousness saike, hapy are you in your sufferings; but I hop you shall have no cause but however it shall be, the hartie prayer of your humble servant to allmightie god to give you a strong faith in Jesus Christ which is not worthy to be compared to any tribulations heere, for a good conscience is a conteniall feast which I doubt not of in you, so I pray god bless you & yours.' This devout letter was followed by more earthly consolations in the form of a venison pasty. 'If it plese god I should a ben happie to have seen you Eate part of it at Claydon.'

June 18, 1655

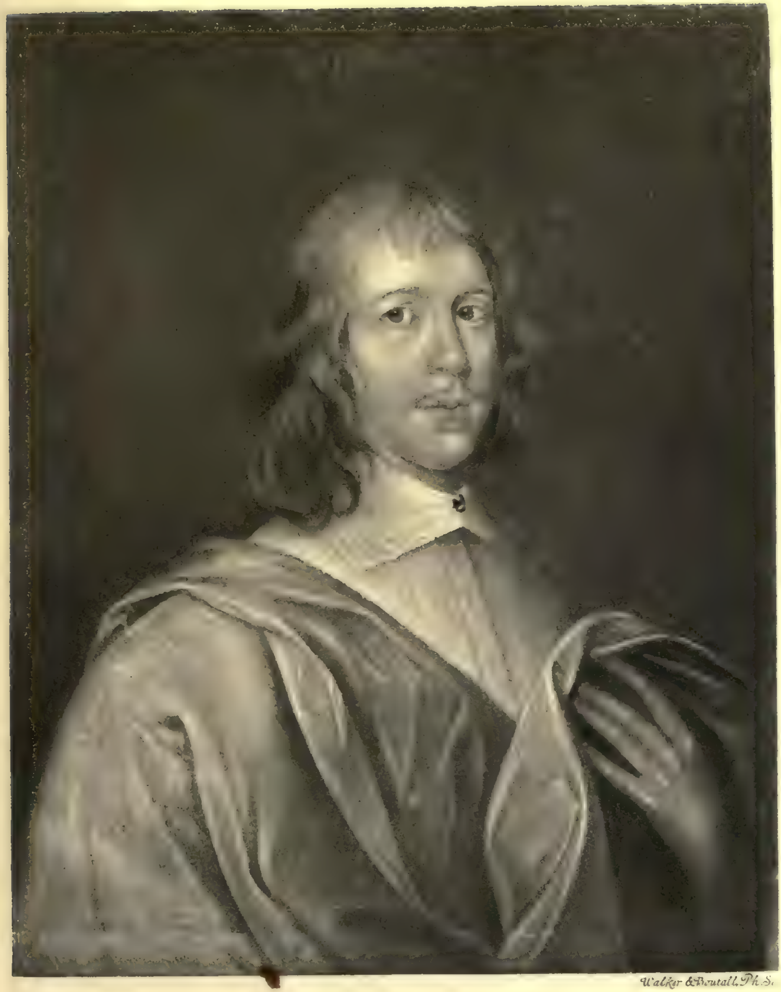
Sir Ralph wrote to Mun again from 'St. James His house. Childe, The letter I writ you on Friday last will fully informe you of my being brought Prisoner to London. That night late many were committed to the Gatehouse, & the next morning at least eleven more of us were comitted to Lambeth House, & that very afternoone my selfe with divers others were committed to this place, where every man hath a guard uppon him day & night, but wee are not kept upp close nor are our friends kept from us, I thanke god I am in good aire & good health & my innocency keepes me cheerfull.' June 22, 1655

Letters of condolence poured in and good wishes for his 'Inlargement.' Mrs. Isham writes: 'With great joie did I receive your leter for the D^r rit soe dolfuley to me, that I could naither eaght, Drinke nor Sleepe the night I herd of it. . . . I am confident that you air tow Discrate as to have had a hand in the last rising.' Doll Leeke is full of sympathy; but 'my dispairing nature is apt to fear the worst, my sister givs me some hope of your relese.' Lady Gawdy wishes that his 'offence against the State, had merited so ill a goale as Croweshall.' He writes to her cheerfully: 'I doubt not but you have heard how highly the Protector hath obleiged me, in sending for me from my owne cottage to lodge me in his owne Pallase, & presently put me into a condition to keepe a Guard both day & night, w^ch is usuall to none but Princes, & all this without my seeking I assure you; & for ought I know (if I behave my June 20, 1655 June 25 selfe well) hee may probably exalt mee somewhat 8 or 10 Rounds Higher too.' Sir Roger writes in answer to such another letter: 'I had much rather seen you in my poore Cottage then to have heard of you in a pallace. . . . I am glad it is no worse since it is no better with you, and that you have wipt off that dirty & wett journey so fairely without prejudice to yo^{r} health. Its well you are so merry, I am sure yo^{r} letter was read with sober sadness in so much that it begott my wife a fitt of trembling in hir heart, which shee is too subject upon all such occasions. When I heare you are free you shall heare more from me, but I pray know, that I will have nothing to doe with any prisoner of that nature, till he hath clear'd himself before my L^{d}, therefore as you would avoyd my censure, acquitt yo^{r} self like an honest man, and then my hermitage will be the fitter to receive you.'

June 24, 1655

Sir Ralph was in pain with a shoulder he had put out some years before; the anxieties and 'inconveniences' of his confinement were affecting his spirits, and he was obliged to employ Robin Kibble, a drunken and careless servant, to write for him. He replied to his old friend with considerable irritation from 'S^{t} James his House,' taking Sir Roger's joke seriously, that he must clear his character as a malignant before he could be received at Wroxall.

Trusty Roger was quite upset at the least threatened interruption of a friendship that had stood the test of such dark and difficult years. He hastens



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yo.r most affectionat humble serv.t

RB Sir Roger Burgoyne.

from a painting at Claydon House.

to reply. 'Had my last letter been intercepted and so interpreted by one of the new gang, I should have pass't it over with a pleasant smile ; but that Sr. R. V. could finde in his heart to make so unkinde a construction of it, the test of a whole synod could not have gained my beliefe, had I not his owne hand for it. I see I must heerafter endeavor to be merry and wise, and to weigh my words before they are sent abroad, least they be found too light : it had not been the first time if you had suffered my folly in that kinde with a great deale of candor, and that now a little jesting should prove sufficient to render me an unworthy clown, by an implicit prohibiting you my house as it were, under the notion of a timerous distemper that of late hath seised upon me, of entertaining such as you are. Let me tell you that I never was in love with the name of Malignant nor any that in earnest did mention it, but heerafter I shall dread & avoyd it for my own part, as I would the taking of a beare by the tooth. I am not willing to dwell upon this ungrateful subject but rather believe that St. James indited your letter & you were only the scribe. But is it possible that any expression that fell from my pen, should alter the resolution of Sir R. V.? I have alwaies thought him as fixed as the earth, but I shall lay the whole blame upon my self. All this to St. James—as for yourself I wish you at liberty & in no worse place then I am in my self. . . . Your most affectionate and discomposed friend and servant.'

But before the soft answer came Sir Ralph had forgotten that there was any cause of offence. July 12, 1655 'Certainly either you or I or both of us,' he wrote, 'are grown notable Drunkards, & know not what wee write. What could you take ill in my last letter that you should thus chide me? I will not chide again, the Victory shall be yours, for you have soe longe & often obleiged me, that you may now use me as you list. I could finde in my hart to breake prison to cleare this Cloud, but not being conscious of ever writing, speaking, or soe much as thinking anything to your prejudice, I know (according to your old rules of kindnesse & justice) you will doe me that right as to esteeme me still your faithfull friend & servant, R. V.' 'Whether I was drunk or madd it matters not,' Sir Roger rejoined, 'if I were mistaken I am glad, and shall be as willing to eate my words as my meat when I am hungry.' Sir Ralph retorts that if he misunderstands him again he will get him 'a home in Bedlam or at least in this place, where for ought I see, you may have leasure enough to coole both your heeles and your head too, for wee heare no newes of our Enlargement: yet some few of us with greate struggling & solicitations have gotten leave to goe home, but soe bound & fetterd, that most of us had much rather remain heere as wee are, then returne to our owne houses with such shackels on our persons, & our Fortunes too. . . . You will not be satisfied unless I spend the summer with you, but alas Sir that's already gon, this 5 weekes imprisonment hath almost eaten up the summer quarter . . . all that I can say more is (that when the Protector hath donn with mee) and that you are alone att Wroxall you may freely dispose of me.'

Sir Ralph's friends were working for his release. There is a copy of a letter from Colonel Thomas Hammond to a person in authority unnamed: 'Our ould acquintance makes me write to you about a cosen of my wife's, S^r^ Ralfe Verny, intreating you to stand his friend; he has by a mistake (I am confident) been delivered to you as a delinquent. He was sitting in the Parlement-house when his father was killed at Edgehill, & sent in volentaryly two horses into the Parlements army, tis true in the yeare 1643 he went beyond sea, it was for his wife's health, who about 3 or 4 yeares after dyed there, & he returned not long after for England, Now you know as much as I, I am confident you will be as tender in oppressing one well affected, as just against a malignant, I am far from pleading for a malignant, we in Surry if men testify ther good affections (though malignants before) by our Commission are directed to spare them, I leave all this with you knowing you will proceed in righteousnesse.'

Doll Leeke writes: 'O that Saint James stood by Croshall wood, I then wold have a care of you myself; it is possible I might be as great a vexasion to you as your jalor, but it should be performed with so much kindness that in charity you would bear with me. . . . I hear some are relest July 4, 1655 and I beleve you have many frinds that wold interest them selfs for you, and prevaill I am confident, I pray stand not to much upon your puntillios for ther is nothing now but self intrest to be preferd : thay say you will have no body medell in this affair ; I hope it is an alterable resolution ; your present condision gives your frinds no satisfaction, nether can it be other then a perpetuall trouble to me.' She begs him to have a doctor's advice, and gives her own. 'I am confident baithing in milk & water wold do you good ; I mean a generall bath, not only your arm . . . I fear you vex yourself, but dear cosen let not your enemies have that advantage over you, for if you weer all destroyed it wold be a pleasure to them ; therefore I beg of you to resolve to be mery & to make much of yourself.' Aunt Sherard's stumbling pen hopes that 'as you waier tacken off sodin, you will be relesed of A sodin tow.' John Stewkely writes his kind inquiries. 'The messenger came a Coachman, but returns Postillion and is upon the spurr.' Sir Ralph replies : 'Wee that are restrayned have no present hope to enjoy our owne Houses in hast, patience is an excellent Vertue & our new masters are resolved to see how large a proportion wee have of it.' July 26, 1655

On July 30 Sir Ralph writes to Lady Gawdy : 'I am very much joyed at Sir Francis Coke's enlargment tis a good president for all we Prisoners to urge to our new masters, when the right plannet reigneth we shall get out . . . tis generally beeleeved the greate and unexpected blow given to the Fleet in the Indies[1] (which is like to bee the Losse of that designe) will put them to soe greate straights for money that their necessities (though not our guilt) will oblige them to use the greater severities towards the Cavalier Party, to whome they attribute all their misfortunes, but with what justice this can bee layd unto theire charge is beyond my apprehension.' To Doll Leeke he writes: 'I knew that Sir Ed: Syd [enham] (with the helpe of Coll: Coke) procured that favour for Sir Francis, but I have noe reason to expect the like, for since my being seized the Collonell hath beene soe strangly shie of mee, that some have woondered at it, & yett I doe not know, that ever in this or any other thing, I oppressed him with the least of my concernes.'

Mun is sick of the Low Countries; 'j'ai assez veu de ces pais icy, je ne m'en soucie plus'; if he may not come home he would go to Heidelberg and study mathematics and German; there is good society there. Sir Ralph hopes to obtain leave to travel, when he might meet Mun abroad; but this is doubtful 'unlesse it bee to the Spaw, or some other Waters, & thats usually granted but for 3 or 6 months at most.' He is not anxious for Mun's return on account of the 'strange life our youth now lead for want of a Court and Playes to entertaine them.' 'Mun confesseth to me hee hath scarse looked at July 13, 1655 a Booke since his coming from Utrecht, if hee hath neglected his exercizes as much I beeleeve, hee may come home & keepe sheep for hee will bee fit for little else . . . he hath a greate aversion to the Court and dancing.'

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[1] A detailed account of this disastrous war appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine*, January 1894, by the Hon. T. W. Fortescue.

Mun asks for 150 yards of black ribbon to trim a grey and black cloth doublet to be worn with scarlet silk stockings, which will make a proper attire, or black, if his father prefers them, as if a 'nice' fancy in stockings was likely to appeal to him in 'St. James his house'; he also requires some Cordovan gloves. Sir Ralph thinks 150 yards of ribbon an excessive quantity for bows, 'soe a suit bee whole, cleane, & fashionable I care not how plaine it bee.' Later in the autumn Mun complains of the unhealthiness of the Hague, which he says has never suited him, but it is too late to think of moving now, 'car j'ai acheptè du tourfe pour me servir tout l'hiver.' Nov. 23, 1655

Mr. William Gee and his wife had ventured back to England, and were anxious to receive Sir Ralph. Their first child, so lovingly expected, died in the spring of 1654. 'Sweet Babby, tis happy,' wrote Sir Ralph, '& the more that it had noe share in the common sinnes and sufferings of these ill times.' 'My wife's faithfull service,' wrote Cousin Gee, '& hearty wishes for your liberty to endure the pennance of a third piece of Beefe, which is all you will find att Tuppendence, more then a reall welcome.'

Doll Leeke and Lady Hobart had all sorts of fine plans for Sir Ralph's release. Lady Warwick's name had been mentioned amongst others who might be approached, as she had more influence than ever in high places. Sir Ralph's reply must have fallen like a cold shower-bath upon these kind busybodies. 'I earnestly beseech you.' he wrote to Lady Hobart, 'not to write to the Person you wott of, concerning mee, or my release. I came in with the crowd, and shall willingly attend to goe out with it. Heere are many that gett off dayly (& I am glad to see the dore open) but to say truth some goe on soe hard, & others on soe unhansome Termes, that I had much rather remaine where I am, then bee at Claydon, on those conditions, although my owne occations did now as much as ever require me there. Divers of our Lords (with your Coz: Sir Fred:) have writ to the Protector & most of the Knights & gentlemen have petitioned him last Weeke, but as yet they can get noe answere. Sir Justinian Isham & my selfe sit still & are willing to see how they are like to succeed, before we appeare too pressing upon our new Masters; but we have a petition ready, which we hope may bee received at any time; being we crave nothing in it, but what they ought to grant to every Englishman in our condition, as well as unto him or me.' August 13, 1655

Sir Ralph claimed equal and public justice for all, not special favour for himself won by influence and intrigue; a tone which the patriots of the Civil War would have warmly approved.

Henry writes having just attended the assizes at Buckingham: 'I must needs say, the Judge att the sise, in his chardge, gave non of us much hopes of any of your libertyes, but didd tell us a did beelive the countrey in generall might bee discontented att their restraint, a excused the Protector and sed as state matters did stand, his highnesse had a good reason for it, & that the innosent should not suffer, for his designe was onley to punish the guilty; but not a word of any treyall when you should bee hard. . . . M^r Sheriff Kept a free and noble table for all commers, and wisht you heartely att it.'

August 13, 1655

'Tis now neare seaven weekes since wee were taken,' Sir Ralph writes to Mr. Cordell, '& as yet wee have never been examined, neither can we yet discover why we were restrayned, nor when we shall be released.'

July 30, 1655

Aug. 23, 1655

'Cozen Stafford is at Liberty uppon Bond, Collonell Ingolsby procured it, & one Collonell Pasterne [Paston] a Norfolke gentleman is also freed, but Sir Justinian Isham & my selfe & all the rest of our number are still in Limbo, though we are daily promised a generall discharge.' Sir Ralph writes to Mrs. Sherard that he is allowed to remove to rooms belonging to her sister Susan Abercromby. 'When I was at St. James his Tennis Court, though I had a very good chamber, yet I had noe place for a servant in the house; they were forced, after I was in my bedd, to goe lodg neare Charing Crosse, which was soe inconvenient that I desired to

Aug. 27, 1655

change my Quarters; and my Aunts house being within the Jurisdiction of the Garrison; she with her mayd resolved to pack away for a considerable time.' Mrs. Sherard is surprised that he should be allowed 'noe greater Liberty, for I her of many as aier quite free, and com into the Countrey which was formerly Deepely ingaged for the lat King.'

'Your one wisdom & the protector's ill nature,' writes Lady Gawdy, 'makes mee dispare of seeinge you this sommer in my durty habitation.' 'Divers of the Grandies,' Sir Ralph replies, 'doe confidently assure us wee shall bee released as soone as the Protector is well & perfectly recovered, but wee have been told the same story in effect at least 6 weekes togeather, yet Jeffery Palmer's being sett at liberty, gives us some small hope that wee may bee soe too.' The Protector had been ailing at intervals all through the summer, the Earl of Norwich wrote to Mr. Secretary Nicholas in the usual tone of a Royalist, alluding to the 'Arch Rebell': 'Questionlesse Cromwell is in huge disorder, as well in his owne bowels as his government.'

Sept. 6, 1655

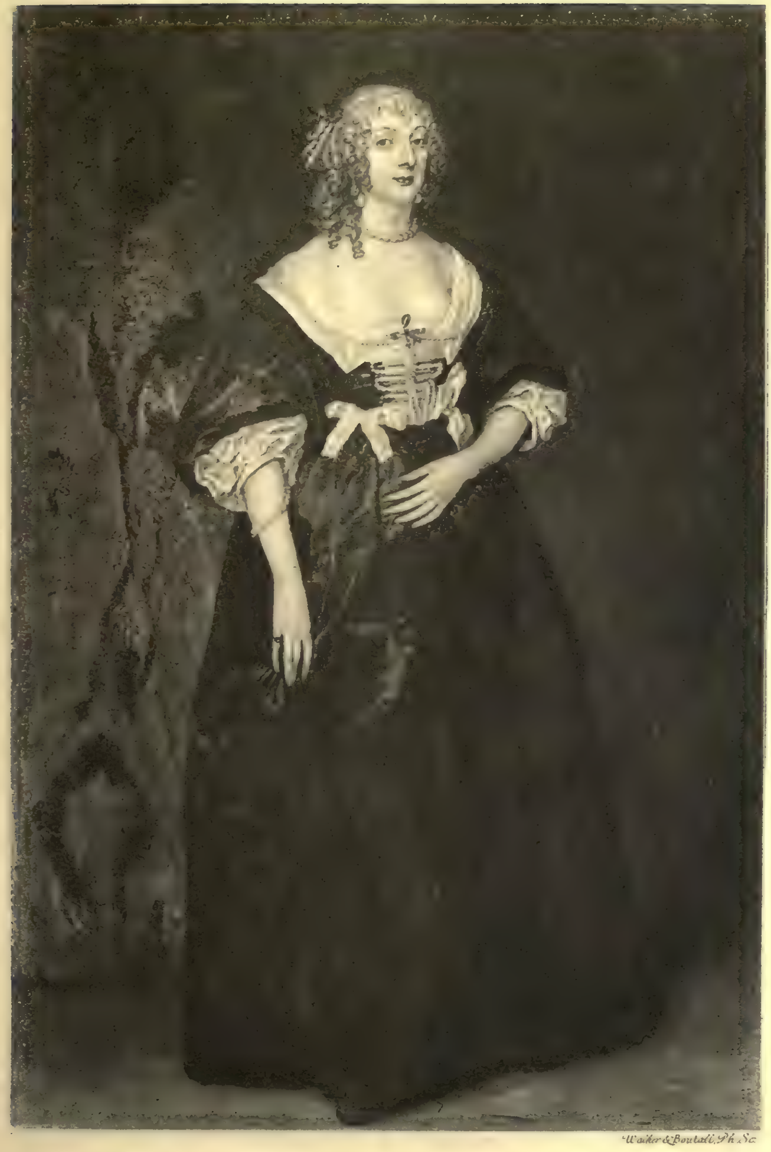
Sept. 8, 1655

June 15, 1655

Cousin Stafford writes after his own release that if those who have been imprisoned are forbidden to go to London, at least he and Sir Ralph may hope to visit each other in Bucks, 'but how great our unhappiness may prove, if wee shall be deprived of the tuition of vigilant Major Browne.' Sept. 3, 1655

The troubles of the times put a strain upon all ordinary friendships. Sir Ralph had been reminding his father's old friend Lady Carnarvon (*née* Herbert), whose picture by Vandyke was amongst his most valued possessions, of a debt owed by her late husband to Sir Edmund amounting to 116*l.* 10*s.* Cousin Thomas Stafford had been the intermediary. Sept. 5, 1655 'I moved yo^{r} business,' he writes, 'to the Lady Carnarvon according to yo^{r} instruction, and I found her very unwilling to meddle wth it, having putt on a resolution (upon the affronts of Russell and unhansom carrage of the wise Lord) to wth draw her selfe fro' all business of that nature for a time, But shee was pleased to say that Sir Orlands Bridgman's judgment must bee taken upon the securitie for all my lords' fathers debtes.' Sir Ralph had been asked the previous year to be a trustee to the 'little Lord,' but as these debts were still unsettled he thought himself not in a position to accept the trust. He wrote to Mr. Stafford: 'I thanke you for mooving the Lady Carnarvon about my money, but since she is soe coole in it, I shall let it rest awhile, had my late Father, or Mother been living, I dare say this debt should have beene preferred in point of payment before any other. The service my Father did that family deserves a better requitall, & soe I shall tell my Lady the very next time I see her.' The money was soon after repaid, and the old cordial relations between them were restored.

Sir Ralph was still in durance vile; mothers and nurses were in despair; no child in the family could



Walker & Boutall, Ph. Sc.

Lady Anne Herbert, Counteſs of Carnarvon
from a painting by Vandyke at Claydon House.

be properly christened in his absence. 'Nat Smith,' grandson of Nat Hobart, was baptized at Radcliffe, 'and for want of a godly godfather,' Henry writes, July 2, 1655 'they invited my worshipp to stand, for w^{ch} in a word I did with a grave & religious grace; many promises I did make for you such if you performe not, shall bee put on your score, in the next world, and not mine, for I doe as little love deepe and sollem ingagements, as your honour doth entringe into bonds. I have given 20*s*. to the nurse and 20*s*. to the midwife and 10*s*. to the nurse-keeper as you ordered.'

Sir Ralph wrote to the baby's grandmother: July 21, 1655 'Sweet Cosen, I am infinitely joyed at your dearest daughter's saife Delivery, and wish myself Delivered too. . . . Nattecock like an honest Fellow & kinde, visited me on Sunday.'

For these country gentlemen, accustomed to live in the fresh air and to do all their business on horseback, it was most irksome and unwholesome to be penned up in London during the summer months, and one after another suffered in health. From the day of his enforced ride to London as a prisoner, in June, Sir Ralph was never in the saddle again till the end of October. So full are the records of this year that we can trace his occupations day by day. He eagerly welcomed every post that visited him, 'Letters,' he says, 'are a very greate comforte in the absence of our friendes, yet they cannot answere us a question though wee desire to bee satisfied in twenty severall particulars concerning those wee love.'

Of good society there was no lack at St. James'; during the early part of the time 'new prisoners of quality' were 'dayly brought in.' But Sir Ralph had not much heart to join in it; he took his meals alone, and although Sir Roger supposed 'that your whole company keepe together and are as merry as birds in a Cage;' Doll Leeke heard from Sir Frederick Cornwallis, who had just been let out of the cage, that Sir Ralph was not at all sociable. 'He was asked how you did, & he ansred you never came amongst them, therfor he could give no account of you.'

But Sir Ralph had at least one old friend at St. James' who took the same line as he did about their detention, and with whom he had a great deal of pleasant intercourse. Sir Justinian Isham, who could win from saucy Dorothy Osborne only the nickname of 'Sir Solomon,' had since found in Vere Leigh a wife who appreciated his solid excellence. He was sadly familiar with bonds and fines, and it added much to his present trouble that he had been torn away from his home when his wife most needed his care and love. News of the birth of a baby Vere reached him at St. James'.

Sir Ralph never lost the opportunity of forwarding a good match. He had then young Charles Gawdy and Edmund to provide for; Sir Justinian's four fair daughters by his first wife had considerable portions;

hence the subject was of great mutual concern, and left room for 'treaties' as interesting and complicated as the moves in a game of chess. Sir Ralph writes to Lady Gawdy of the Miss Ishams with approval: 'The young Women have been bredd more in the country then at London.' 'Their Father dwells neare Northampton, is a very discreet person, of a plentifull Fortune & of an antient Family, who professeth (soe there bee a competencie) to preferre the parts & person of A man before his Fortune.' Of maidens Sir Ralph had Cary's stepdaughters to think of, a number of young Hobarts and Dentons, and very specially his own sister Betty, who thus expressed her sense of his merits: 'I cannot say you have no skill in providing Husbands, for I am confident when you tack such an imployment upon you, that you will bring it to perfection.' But, alas for Betty's hopes, Sir Ralph found eldest sons a good deal easier to treat for than younger daughters, unless they were heiresses like Margaret and Mary Eure, who were besieged with suitors. Robert Cotton of Combermere is 'languishing for love of Margaret, sayes his prayers backwards, & wishes all ill-luck to his rivalls.' Mrs. Isham recommends 'Mr. Bacchus' daughter and heiress for Mun, but the 'little nitty old man' is treating simultaneously in another quarter, to Sir Ralph's great wrath, so these negotiations serve only to while the time away. July 12, 1655

Lady Gawdy ventures to remonstrate again with Sir Ralph for refusing the conditions of release offered

Sept. 26, 1655 him. 'I am aprehensive you will not let selfe interest have any power to sway the lest part of that that lookes like honour. Pray only lay aside singularity, for to bee vertuous alone will bee interperted A vise.'

Sir Ralph was not likely to be convinced by such feminine reasoning; but with many apologies this Oct. 3, 1655 anxious friend returns to the charge: 'Though I am assured all you doe may indure the most critticall triall of judgment, yett I must confes my selfe unsattisfied to heare you chuse restrant, when others of your consorts prefer liberty. I ges you have not many of so high harte as your selfe left with you, you can best judge of what consiquences your refuse of grace may prove whether faitall or noe, 'tis not every enemie can cherish worth in the person opposes.' Doll Leeke Sept. 26, 1655 hopes he will not 'be perticular in the refusall, for Liberty is so presious (& the parsons you receve it from so indifirant whether you have it or noe) that you ought rather to court it, then to be nise in accepting, pardon me if I have said too much.'

Cousin Stafford's men after hay-harvest have Oct. 3, 1655 searched the hedgerows for elms for Sir Ralph. 'I pray remember my Sweet Bryer,' he writes; 'if those that gather the setts use to come to Winslow market, it will cost nothing to bring them to Claydon, for I will appoint my man Roades to take care of it there, hee seldome misses a markett day, I thinke you told mee they were about halfe a crown or 3 shillings a thousand, which is cheape enough, & if they be to be had at soe easy a Rate, I would have 2000 gathered as soone as you please, & sent in by 500 or 1000 a weeke, till the whole 2000 were gathered. Charme them least they send ordinary Bryers, for sweet Bryers; & lett me know if I may have woodbines at the same rate.' The very sound of woodbine and sweetbriar must have made Sir Ralph long to see the last remains of summer in his garden. Sir Roger, in despair, hopes at least that he may spend Christmas with them 'if non bee before hand with me, as I trust they are not, especially St. James.'

Wearied out at last, though not convinced, Sir Ralph felt that he would make himself too conspicuous by being the only prisoner who refused to be liberated on terms which even Sir Justinian had accepted. He therefore entered into a bond to the Lord Protector for 2,000*l.*, together with Dr. William Denton and Mr. Thomas Leeke, Lieut.-Col. Worsley to deliver up the bond at the end of a year if it were not forfeited in the meantime. 'Colonel Worsley then discharged Sir Ralph the next day out of prison.' This is his own account of it:—'On Thursday with the rest of the crowd, I sealed a Bond soe full of Barbarous conditions that I am ashamed to insert them here. All the Favour that could bee obtained was to get it limited for a yeare, but tis so untowardly penned that I doubt they will continue it longer on us. The Truth is if any one person of those I use to converse with all, had thought fit to refuse it, I

London, Oct. 8, 1655

should have donn soe too, but . . . to bee singular in such a thing, at such a time, would have been interpreted meerly to be stubbornesse.'

Oct. 23, 1655

Cary Gardiner wrote on the anniversary of the battle of Edgehill : 'The fatall day to Inglond & our family,' to congratulate him 'on his inlardgment.'

There is a memorandum in his own handwriting :—'The 26 Octob: 1655 I writ Mun word, I was come to Claydon uppon Bond.' Sir Roger writes: 'I am gladd any part of you is at liberty, though you bee no man of your hands, your feet will serve my turn, if you will but make good use of them now they are at liberty. Come when you will, I feare you not, since your hands are tied.'

Oct. 10, 1655

'Forgive me,' wrote Lady Gawdy 'if I receive sattisfaction in what you regrett at—your liberty. I looke at the impossibility of your haveinge it on termes agreeable to your judgment, and all that are over Come, are not conquered, nor are we answerable for our faits. There is a soveranity in honour which noe usurpation can depose, you are safe in that, & so longe may looke with contempt on inferior objects. If my desire of youre freedom bee an evidence of my folly . . . tis noe nuse that our sex should want wisdom, and if all the defects I have were as visable, you could not finde an excuse for your freindshipp to Sir, your humble servant, Vere Gawdy.'

Oct. 15, 1655

Sir Ralph's reply defines his position. 'Madame, you are highly charritable in cheering upp a person in my condition, & I humbly thank you for it; for though the Example of very many (farre Wiser & better men then my selfe) might somewhat excuse my signing that ugly conditioned Bond, yet your approbation gives me farre more satisfaction then all that they have done. The truth is, though I infinitely desired to bee at home, & my occasions very much require mee there, yet it was to avoyd singularity rather then any thinge else, that induced mee to seale it; and were I now to begin againe (unlesse some others would joyne with mee) possibly I might struggle long to little purpose and at last be forced to accept of the same conditions, to avoyd a greater mischeife. For those that are now in power take it very ill, and will not allow that the least of theire commands should bee disputed by any, much lesse by so inconsiderable a person as Madame, Your humblest servant, R. V.'

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MAJOR-GENERALS AND THE SQUIRES.

1655–1657.

Though Justice against Fate complain,
And plead the ancient rights in vain.—MARVELL.

SIR RALPH's satisfaction in his release from imprisonment was soon clouded over by fresh anxieties. The year 1655 had seen Cromwell's protest and Milton's sonnet on behalf of the persecuted Piedmontese; all Europe recognised the power of the Lord Protector to defend English and Protestant interests abroad; the commercial and industrial classes at home were prosperous and, on the whole, contented; but in these triumphant days of the great Puritan's rule the little world pictured in the Verney letters was plunged in sadness. It was a world of 'poor unknown Royalist squires,' as Carlyle terms them, and of other squires, by no means Royalist, who vainly tried to remain 'unknown' to the Major-Generals, 'Cromwell's Mastiffs,' who had fastened on their estates. The dismal words, Composition, Compurgation, Decimation, Sequestration (as uncouth and un-English in sound as in political import), constantly appear in the letters, and the squires shuddered to be reminded that they had been classed as Malignants, Delinquents, and Compounders, or at the best as 'Disaffected Only.'

These troubles were the more bitterly felt by the country gentlemen because they were just beginning to breathe again after the long fierce strife of the Civil War. Some had ventured to return home after years of exile; many country-houses like Wroxall, Lamport, and Claydon were being repaired and beautified, and old debts were beginning to be paid, when the land owners were suddenly overwhelmed with fresh exactions. 'Of all mine acquaintance, there is scarce an honest man that is not in a borrowing condition,' writes Sir Ralph.

But an act of kindness greatly cheered his own return home. A servant arrived with a beautiful roan mare (such as Sir Ralph would never have purchased for his own riding) and a note from Aunt Sherard 'because . . . you should be well mounted to bring Oct. 29. 1655 you throoe the Deepe waies, I have presented you with this maier, being confident shee will carry you iseylie, shee is to be rid in a bit, for elce her metell is such as shee will goe tow fast for your grave pas . . . let your servants have a caier of the maier after watering, for elce shee may run awaie with them.' 'Yeasterday Nov. 1, 1655 you surprised mee strangely,' he replies, 'with such a greate, and unexpected present, that I know not what to say, if any thing could possibly make me a jocky, certainly you have taken the way to doe it, I finde it already a little coming uppon me, for (though I never was on Horseback since y^e^ middle of June, yet) I am soe in love with this maire, that I am now growne almost weary of my coach, and choose to ride on her to Hillesdon presently; perhapps she may put me into such a gadding humour, that you (and all the rest of my friends & acquaintance) may have just cause to repent your Bounty.' Nov. 5, 1655 'I am most harteyli glad as the maier pleseth you,' writes Aunt Sherard; 'I toocke it uppon trust, for I have noe scill in horsis my selfe. All y^e newes I have to relat to you is that yo^r old acquaintance that toocke you prison'r is to be in this country to tacke y^e bondes of all the jhentrey in the cuntray that thay acket not against my lord protector. The cavaleres aier to give 5,000*l.* pond bond, and A 100 pond bond for every servant thay keepe, this is y^e newes of ower cuntry, and we expecte ower mastor her on Munday next, but he stais not above a wicke in thes partes, you see my Lord protector can secewer himselfe—I licke him well.'

Dr. Denton doubts whether Sir Ralph is prudent Nov. 10, 1655 to absent himself from Claydon. 'Knowing y^r intentions are for Whissendine, I thought fitt to lett y^u know that I heare that some of the Maior Generalls act already, & that Maior Butler hath required my L^d Westmoreland amongst others to appear at Ketteringe. . . . If y^u should be summoned when from home, happily you may be at such a distance as y^u may not appeare at the time appointed & soe may forfeit the bond, you best know what y^u have to doe, but I wish you had your bond up & at Rome. If my nagg come to you whilst at home, I pray see him goe uppon his pace, if this storme hold, a long-eared asse may serve my turne.' 'This day Dick Winwood tells me Nov. 12, 1655 Northampton is very full of persons sum̃oned in to give security for themselves & serv^{ts} & a particular of their estate reall and personall, & must pay a 10th of the reall annually, & a 15th of their personall estate, & if not a just particular, then a confiscation. It is time to looke about y^{u}. I heare L^{d} Stanhop is sum̃oned in, if soe then it is at pleasure, & Delinquency shall be noe standard. I thinke he never compounded.' Sir Justinian hopes that Sir Ralph 'will vouchsafe him some stay at Lamport,' 'where Nov. 2, 1655 you may see what the want of my presence hath now necessitated me to in very ill season, my house not yet all covered nor yet, I assure you so open as you shall ever find the heart of Sir, Your affectionate friend to serve you.'

Another letter in Sir Justinian's hand is signed only with an allusion to the building he is carrying on. 'Sir, You may suppose They began with this Nov. 10, 1655 country, new bonds indeterminable & in greater sum̃s offered even to them who had given others formerly at Lond: as also single bonds for the good behaviour of servants, noe particulars of the estates to be received before the bonds were signed, & they to be signed forthwith, or els imprisonment & sequestration to follow imediately; . . . I have not yet heard of any refusall, not being allow'd leave to depart y^{e} towne

[Northampton] before signing. . . . All y^e^ Instructions with y^e^ Additional ones we could not yet see, nor heare what is don in other places. My eldest daughter now ill & the worse I doubt for my trouble, made mee returne fro' Northampton sooner then I would, though one of y^e^ last sealers. Sir wholly yours ARCHITRAVE FREEZE & CORNICE.'

Dr. Denton is running about the town in Sir Ralph's interest, but can see neither Colonel Cooke, 'whom I hunted dry foot,' nor Lord Fleetwood. Nov. 17, 1655 His advice to Sir Ralph is 'to appeare when sum̃oned & I thinke best to deliver noe particular, but crave leave to appeale to my L^d^ or his councell or to both, for though you claime noe Articles, nor have any need of any act of oblivion (you are of my L^d^ Cooke's mind to refuse noe pardon that God & his kinge would give him) yett y^u^ claim by a law paramount to them, which is y^r^ iñocency, as havinge never been a Delinq^t^ etc. they told S^r^ Jo: Mounson [the elder brother of the doctor's friend in the Fleet] that they came not to dispute etc. & he refusinge to submitt, they quartered 50 horse on him, with a menace of 500 more in case he did not submitt within 8 daies, which he not doinge, they did not send 500 horse but sequestred him. . . . Kate is y^r^ serv^t^ for partridges. I heare y^e^ 10^th^ is to be a perpetuall revenue, maugre all intayles & settle^nts^, & that Sequestrac̃on & Delinquency shall not be the only standard, but Dissaffection shall in due time have its place, & inquiry is made after the estates of such as died Delinquents unsequestred, as Earle of Sunderland etc., & of Disaffected Only, as M^r^ Darcy etc.'

Mr. Cordell had consulted Sir Ralph during the summer of 1655 as to whether he might venture to return to England with Robert Cotton, 'though known to bear a Royalist name.' Sir Ralph thought that he might, 'soe that you keep noe mallignant Company . . . but Sir mistake me not, for I doe not thinke you can with safety come to London, by reason of the Protector's late Proclamation which prohibits all that have adhered to the late King, or his party from being here, or within twenty miles till the 20th October next, and unless they have spetiall license, or are under restraynt, or in eminent danger of death, or that London bee their usuall habitation. Now Sir, though you never did act anything, yet how farre the word "adhered" will be interpreted to extend, I dare not take upon me to determine, but Sir, Claydon is 40 miles from hence, & whether I am there or not, you shall bee sure to bee welcome. In earnest, at Claydon you may despatch your businesse as well as at any plaice but London, for you may write and send letters thrice a weeke, and about 2 months hence you may come up with freedome, y^r^ horse shall be as welcome as yourself, and since y^r^ vocations call you homewards, doe me the favour to dispatch them there. M^r^ Cotton is out of all danger for when he went from home, hee was not old enough to adhere to any side. Your company may possibly draw him

Aug. 28, 1655

London, Dec. 10, 1655

unto my house & that would be a double favour.' Mr. Cordell, however, upon this report decided to remain abroad, especially as Sir Ralph had procured him a fresh pupil, John Bridgeman, son of Sir Orlando. A few months later Sir Ralph was shocked to receive the following letter from the young man : 'Sir, I make no question but you will be as much surprized as I have been perplexed with the sadd and unexpected newse of the death of my deare freind M^{r} Cordell, who immediately uppon his com̃ing to Paris fell sicke, and dyed in lesse then 10 dayes, it beeing now about 3 weekes since this suddaine & unfortunate accident happened, which hath soe troubled mee that I could not recollect my selfe sooner, to give you timelier notice of it.' In December 1653, 'the sad accident befell Mons^{r} Du Val which caused his death,' so of the trio of Sir Ralph's friends who had met at Blois, Cousin Gee alone survived.

Dec. 4, 1655

Dismal letters come in from various other counties. Cary writes from Hampshire : 'Major [General] Goff hath bin in thes parts this day fortnight, and continues heare ; all I heare he hath yet don is to send for all sequestred parsons, and Romes catholicks, and that they must pay the tenth part tord the maintenance of an army besides ther usiall contrabution, but as yet nothing is setled, what more he may due as yet we know not, only ther is a flying report that ther must be no more sherifes but the truth I cannot tell.'

Sir Roger, who does not despair of having his friend's company at 'Pie-tide,' tells him of the proceedings in Warwickshire. 'The grand comissioner is come to these parts, and convented before him the principall gentry of o^r^ County that have either been sequestred, or sequestrable, though they escaped the hands of the Comittee. The 10^th^ part is to be paid to the L^d^ Protector, of all that they have, but if not worth full 1500*l.* in land and goods, they may escape that shott, however all are to give a security for their peacable behaviour . . . they are not permitted to have any arms in their houses, not so much as a birding piece, no not a sword, but are to send them to the Cheif Comander of the County; this was expresst to the chiefe of them my L^d^ S^r^ Thomas Lee, whose estate according to the accompt he gave him amounted to 2,000*l.* p. an. —no more than a 1000*l.* was demanded for his security, he desired to know whether any of his own tribes security would be taken—replie was made, with all their hearts, for they had rather sue their enemies than their friends—he was required to give in security for all his servants, which though he thought somewhat hard, yet was contented to submitt, their being but 100*l.* security demanded of him for them all . . . S^r^ ffrancis Willowby was the man who was summoned in and pleaded a non sequestration, the more to blame, replied Major Generall Whally, was the commitee, for you sent in two horses to the king, so he was cast as for the 10^th^

Dec. 10, 1655

part. S^r^ Clement Fisher though sequestred, pleaded an article which runns to this senc that those are to be excepted who have manifested their good affections to the comon wealth since ; which he pretends to have done by a voluntary offering of himself both to Collonell Hawksworth of our County, and Sir Gilbard Pickering of the Privy Councell for to serve the L^d^ protector, when the late insurrection began to appeare ; this if he can get but the test of from S^r^ Gilbard will free him. S^r^ George Devoreux though not sequestred, being charged for sending in two horses, pleaded that his unruly sonne tooke them out of his stable without his knowledge or consent, and went to the Kinge with them, this reprieved him for the present however, & was dismiss'd upon it.'

It is a sad Christmas to them all. Henry is in despair, and no wonder ; these are no days for 'progresses of pleasure.' 'How to dispose of myselfe I know not, for if proclamations march forth thus thick, and all sports put downe, & the gentrey not permitted to meete, I am suer my fortune will be to breake.' There were many better men than Henry Verney who held the same opinion.

The Doctor made a brave show of cheerfulness. Sir Ralph had sent up some additions to their Christmas fare. 'I have very good skill in Buns,' he wrote, 'and when I have tasted them, you shall have the doctor's opinion of them. . . . Kate says you are very quaint, & yet but a scrubbed K^t^, she doubts you want a Bun your selfe you are so waggish.

Mall saies you are a cheatinge K^{t} for sending 4 puddings short of what you write.'

'Claydon loves not Christmas,' writes Sir Ralph, 'wee are all Roundheades on that point to save charges, w^{ch} is now more allowable being threatened with such new & greate Impositions, meere necessity will force us to bee strangely thrifty: were I somewhat younger I would binde my selfe Apprentice to old Audley, for I know not an abler master to teach mee to bee provident.'[1]

Sir Roger writes on Christmas Eve: 'I understood by yours of the 17th that you were then at Claydon, but to prevent suspition of superstition you intended very suddenly to remove, but you tell me not whither, but I suppose not far unless hither, least the Abbattess of Wroxall send a bull to excommunicate you. . . . The Major Generall is, as I heare, gon out of our County & I presume hath left his directions to be observed by the Commissioners. . . . I pray let me hear how you have disposed of yourself this Xmas, its possible I may hold it as superstitious to keep it next yeare as you doe this.'

Tom, in 'weather so piercing cold,' and 'with fingers so nummed' that he can hardly write, is the only one who goes through the form of wishing Sir Ralph 'a merry, happy, & joyfull Christmas.' 'Had things fell out as I once expected, this blessed time might have proved somewhat fortunate to mee.' And there is a piteous whine for 'a small augmentation' of his quarter, long since forestalled.

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[1] There is an old tract 'The Way to be Rich according to the Practice of the great Audley, who began with 200*l.* in 1605, and died worth 400,000*l.*, November 1662.' London: printed for E. Davies, 1662.

Henry is at Wolverton, and proposes to Sir Ralph to dine with him there. He replies from Claydon Jan. 19, 1656 that he would willingly have done it 'uppon the score of kindred' on his way from town, 'but I thought you had known me better then to imagen (that without greate & pressinge businesse) my old and lazy bones (in these short daies & ill waies) could goe from hence to Wolverton & dine & chat, and return back heather in a day.'

Jan. 24, 1656 Dr. Denton writes from town: 'On Munday last 2 prisoners walking with theire soldat in the springe garden, endeavored to bribe him, but not prevaylinge, went to bind him, which not succeedinge they shot him, some say with his owne musquett, others with a pockett pistoll. This hath occasioned all prisoners to be called to theire quarters, & some say they will suddenly be tried for theire lives.' He writes again: Jan. 31, 1656 'There is a Committee of 4, viz: Lambert, Fleetwood, Mulgrave, Jones, appointed to consider what prisoners are fittest to be released, but they have not yett sate. The souldier that was wounded in Springe garden by the 3 prisoners is dead, & he that killed him is in the dungeon, & the others are prisoners & are all to be tried for theire lives—dy sure enough [will] one or more.'

Sir Ralph wishes to spend the spring in safe obscurity at Claydon, and Sir Roger writes, hoping that he may remain 'a fixed starr' in his own region. 'I perceive you are shortly in expectation of a visitt from a person of quality: I shall longe to heare that it is well over.'

'You doe not heare that I am sent for to Alsbery,' Sir Ralph writes to Roades, 'for if you did, you would certainly send a messenger to me with the summons, or a copy of it. But I trust in God they will let me Rest in quiet.' There is a rumour of a warrant out against him, but perchance ''tis but a Fable.' Sir Ralph's fears, however, are soon confirmed. He receives a list of forty persons summoned to appear before the 'person of quality' to whom Sir Roger referred, in which his own name appears; and a second list of the Bucks Commissioners sitting with Lord Fleetwood the Major-General; or in his absence with 'Major Packer' as Chairman of the Court.

It is sufficient to read the two lists, in which the gentlemen of a county are pitted against each other, one set as judges and the other as delinquents, to understand the irritation caused by the formation of such tribunals. Dr. Denton, writing to Sir Ralph of an action he has brought before Quarter Sessions, advises him 'to end it to-night before tomorrow if possible, & before any Major Generalls appeare in your Quarters . . . for I believe many of your Justices will be coadjutors & informers. Verbum sapienti suf.' Dec. 1655

Sir Ralph applied to the clerk of the former Sequestration Committee, and received a certificate

March 7, 1656 'that it doth not appeare (neither is there) any charge of Delinquency, Sequestration or otherwise against the said Sir Ralph Verney.' He also obtained from the Haberdashers' Hall a note of the proceedings formerly instituted against him, and the subsequent entry 'at the Committee for the County of Bucks sitting at Aylsbury the 29th of May, 1647. . . . That the estate of Sir Ralph Verney was the 5th of January then last, discharged of Sequestracion by order of the Committee of Lords & Commons.' March 11, 1656 He had also 'a note for the horses given by him, as a voluntary contribution to the Parliamentary Army, during the Civil War.' Thus fortified Sir Ralph appealed to Cromwell. The Doctor was of opinion that the petition would avail but little. 'Favour goes further than arguments.' Cousin Smith helped Sir Ralph in drafting his petition,[1]

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[1] *Sir Ralph's Petition.*

To his Highness the Lord Protector of the com̄onwealth of England Scotland & Ireland & the Dominions thereto belonging:

The most humble Petic̄on of Sir Ralph Verney Humbly sheweth:

That your Petic̄oner was never in any of the late King's quarters (though his whole estate lay within them) but constantly resided in London.

That in the yeare 1643 without any intention of disservice to the Parliam^{t} hee was necessitated to carry his wife into the hotter & further parts of France for the recovery of her health (who in the yeare 1650 dyed there of consumption), & hee returned not untill the yeare 1652.

That before his departure hee gave publique testimony of his good affections to the Parliam^{t} by his voluntary contribution of horses and by his free and voluntary loane of 100*l.* uppon the 400,000*l.* Act, for which he with other gent: of the County of Bucks, had the thanks of the house of Com̄ons, which was not repaied unto him untill 1647, 1648, but he did not succeed in saving his own fortune from decimation.[1]

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and then without interest though hee might have had that also with the principall.

That hee is no Delinq^{t} nor ever compounded nor his estate ever in charge, or anything recvd thereout by any sequestrations, nor ever acted anything ag^{t} the late Parliam^{t} or this p̃sent Government nor hath ever been accused for anything relating to the late Wars or the former or later rysings (nor any wayes privy to them) or for any disservice or disaffection to the p̃sent government, nor is hee conscious of doeing anything to merrit your Highness' displeasure.

That since his returne from beyond seas he hath complyed in all this with the p̃sent government.

That your Highnes' Com^{n} under the Major Generall for the County of Bucks, finding your Pet^{r} once sequestred though for absence onely, and not for any delinquency, & though Peticõn^{rs} sequestration, uppon his appeale to the house of Commons was dishandyed by the Com^{ers} of Lords & Cõmons for sequestratõns by speciall order of the house of Cõmons whereof your Pet^{r} was a member, yet y^{e} said Com^{s} have ordered your Petitoñ^{r} to bring in a p̃ticular of his estate both reall and personall the 20th of this instant Month uppon perill of sequestration.

That if hee should bee made lyable to this new Tax the damage which it will bring uppon his estate hee being very much indebted, and the p̃indice which it will bring uppon his person, to bee accompted a Delinq^{t} & disaffected to your Highnes & your Governm^{t} would bee such a marke of your Highnes' displeasure as would tend to his utter ruine.

Hee therefore most humbly desires your Highnes' grace & favour to graunt your Order to the Maior Generall & Com^{e} for the County of Bucks or any Three of them to certify what other cause they have (if any) ag^{t} yo^{r} Peticõn^{r} then it herein before expressed, and untill such certificate and yo^{r} Highnes future pleasure knowne thereuppon to respite all Proceedings ag^{t} yo^{r} Pet^{r} that soe yo^{r} Pet^{r} may bee wholly acquitted or disshandyed according to his innocency or guilt and yo^{r} Highnes justice and clemency.

And yo^{r} Pet^{r} shall pray.

[1] *William Smith's Decimation.*

Ordered By the Com^{rs} for the County of Bucks appointed by his Highnesse & the Councell for securing the Peace of the Commonwealth.

Whereas William Smith of Akely Esq^{re} appeared before us this day, & delivered in under his hande and seale, an account of his Estate, which is partly reall & partly personall, amounting to the vallue of

It would have comforted the poor Bucks squires who rode away from 'the George in Aylesbury' on that black Friday with such unpleasant documents, buttoned under their riding-coats, could they have foreseen how soon the power of the Major-Generals was to be swept away.

Meanwhile 'the said Tax,' imposed with such extreme precision, had to be met at once, Squire Smith's hospitalities ever tended to exceed his income; and, with his stables full of horses, and an increasing number of little heads in the nursery upstairs, he and his wife must have spent an anxious evening over ways and means, after his twenty-miles' ride home. Sir Ralph resented the injustice of being taxed as a malignant quite as much as the financial loss.

Mun, who is ever 'a very ill manager of his affairs,' has spent the money sent him for his journey home, and asks for more: 'I am now in very great trouble,' March 14, 1656 replies his father, 'and in danger to loose the

three thousand, one hundred and fifty nine pounds; It is therefore ordered by the Com^{rs} that in consideration thereof, hee pay downe two hundred & ten pounds into the hands of M^{r} Brockhurst, appointed Treasurer for the same, att the signe of the George in Aylesbury, upon the twentieth day of March instant, or else one & twenty pounds a yeare till the said Tax bee remitted; and if shall accept of the charging of his Land as aforesaid this yearly summe of one & twenty pounds unto the aforesaid Treasurer upon fryday next being the fourteenth day of this instant March & the other moitie on the foure & twentieth day of June next after, & begin the next payment on the one & twentieth day of December following, at the signe of the George in Aylesbury aforesaid & from thence forward continue the payment of the said Tax half yearly upon the said dayes until the same be remitted.

Given under our hands the seventh day of March 1655 [6].

WILL: PACKER. G. FLEETWOOD. FRA: RUSSELL.

Tenth part of my Estate, & if I deliver not in a perticuler of my Estate reall & personall on Thursday next, they will sequester me. This puts me to an appeale to the Protector & Councell, which is not only very chargeable to follow, but the successe soe Hazardous, that I know not which way to turne me. I am now giveing over Housekeeping, and discharging the most part of my Workmen that were building and fiting upp my House, & I shall lessen my Family all I can, to put me in a capacity to pay my deare Father's Debts; which I see (by your expenses) you considder soe little, that I am resolved to considder them the more. . . . I should have been glad to have seene you contract your expenses into a narrower compasse. . . . I shall now bee silent, & begg of God to direct us both for the best. Adieu. . . . The Pacquet Boate from Dunkerke to Dover, is much the shortest Passage, but take heed then of bringing anything more with you then the cloathes uppon your Back, & those the Worst you have, for tis reported the passengers (by reason of our Warre with Spaine) are often pillaged. . . . God blesse you in your jorney & grant us a good meeting, & make you happier then your most affectionate father.'

Dr. Denton writes: 'Deare Raph, It was almost 9 a clock att night before I came home to receave yours of this daies date, soe that I can doe nothinge this night . . . & tomorrow I doubt I shall doe as little, beinge to march to the towne in the morninge about the same errand in my owne March 21, 1656 concerne in which I doe not thinke to make use of any Privy Councellor or any eminent person (who doe not love to be too much troubled) for my owne selfe, but will reserve them to spend theire shott for somebody else. I have little crotchetts in my nodle & I will first try what they will doe. You will want Sir R[ichard] T[emple] to bringe you to the little officers, & to acquaint you with some little waies.'

March 17, 1656

Sir Roger wonders 'how any can possibly wind themselves into an estate that hath so much innocency to protect it, but my hopes are that your feares are more than your dainger . . . trouble not your self, for an appeale to my Lord Protector, so noble & upright a person, I question not but will free you from such high inconveniences.'

Some of the agencies Dr. Denton alluded to were set in motion, but the 'eminent person,' a cousin of Charles, 'Lord Fleetwood,' who was induced to write to one of the Bucks Commissioners seems to be a good deal more anxious not to compromise himself, than to help on Sir Ralph's petition.

March 18, 1656

'For the Hon^{ble} Coll: George Fleetwood. Noble Sir, I am importuned, & beyond myne owne inclination prevailed with, to give you the trouble of these Lines, in the behalfe of Sir Ralph Verney. I know hee hath a petition depending before his Highnesse, which if true, his case seemes to be hard; all that is desired is that hee might have some little time given him before hee bee proceeded against, that soe hee may gaine his Highnesse answere to his application. The gentleman is unknowne to me. This is submitted to your consideration & if any thing of just favour may bee afforded him, twill much oblige him who beggs your pardon for this presumption, and subscribes himselfe Your most humble servant Tho: Sanford.'

March 20, 1656

Sir Ralph 'in greate perplexitie' went down to Aylesbury; the Protector had referred his petition back to the Bucks Committee, and he had prepared the 'perticuler' of his property in case he should not get a reprieve. He returns his estate at Middle Claydon as worth about 711*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* yearly, but states 'that a greate part of it being in his owne hands, & other parts being never let neither by himselfe nor his Father but alwaies managed by a Bayliffe, he cannot set downe the yearly rent exactly.' There are only '4 Dairy Cowes'; but there are '13 draught Bullocks; a coach and 2 coach horses, 3 Saddle Horses, 6 young steres, 1 yearling calfe; Wood, Hay, Peate & some Timber brought to be used about his house, worth about 150*l.*; his household goods his servants estimate about 300*l.*, but his debts amount to ten times more than this money.' He mentions some 'small Rents at Mursley, besides a cottage or two that never paid any Rent.'

He writes to Dr. Denton from Aylesbury an account of his long and harassing day before the commissioners, when he argued his own case. 'Deare D^{r}, I followed your directions & pressed all that could bee for a rehearing, soe they bid me withdraw, but being called in againe, they told me plainly though there were new matter, it lay not in their power to relieve mee, for they had only authority to charge all that were sequestered, not to acquitt them ; they were not judges whether I was justly sequestered or not, that belonged only to the protector & his councell, & therefore they desired my perticuler. Then I acquainted them with the reference from the protector, & pressed hard for a suspension, soe they bid me withdraw againe, they told mee they would certify but they would not suspend, but they would give me till their next meeting (which would be about 3 weekes hence) to pay in my money, & if in the interim I could be discharged, they would be well pleased. Then I pressed very hard againe for a suspension, & lett them see how much harder it was to get a decimation [taken off] then to keep my selfe from being decimated. But when I saw there was no remedy, I desired that my name might not be entered into any of their bookes, nor any of their proceedings against me, for twas not the money I stood upon, but the mark of delinquency. Soe they bid me withdraw againe, & being called in they told [me] they would comply with mee in that, & cause the clerk only to take short noates of all that concerned mee, but not to enter it in any booke, till my Lord Protector's pleasure were knowne upon my petition. I urged that 'twas unlikely I should gett an answer before the time of payment of my money, & if it were entred into the Treasurer's booke, it would bee an evidence against mee, soe they told mee it should not be entred into any booke, though it were paid. Upon this I give them a perticuler which was read, & being appointed to withdraw the 4th time, they called me in againe & asked mee how & when those rent-charges & reversions were settled. I replied by my oncle Sir Francis, by my father many yeares since, & some by my selfe, soe they told mee if I did not gett the discharge, I must pay the Tenth, for what was mentioned to be in possession, which I gave in at 722*l.* 0*s.* 9*d.* per annum, & they told mee they would passe by that which was in reversion, & my personal estate also which I valued in all at 450*l.*'

It would seem by this account that the gentlemen to whom this ungracious and difficult work was given took some trouble to carry it out with patience and fairness, so far as their instructions allowed them. Sir Ralph thereupon drafted a second petition to Cromwell, which he sent in with a certificate, signed by seven of the Bucks Commissioners, that they found he had been formerly released from sequestration 'by a Committee of both Houses of Parliament' and the final decision as to the decimation was again referred to his Highness.

William Roades, who knew better than anyone how fiercely the Royalists had resented Sir Ralph's action in the past, wrote the following memorandum for Dr. Denton: 'Sir, My master Sir Raph Verney has had very hard mesure—first to have his father slaine in the late Kinges service, and after that great losse, to suffer so much by the Kinges soldiers. For first prince Morris' soldiers did discharge farmer Francis Tuckwell and the rest of his tenants at [Ti]ngwick in Buckingham in the year 1643, to pay him no more Rent, but pay it to them, and plundered the tenant, & threatened him so much, as he was faine to leave his hous because he was my masters tenant; and in the yeare 1644, Sir luoe dives [Sir Lewis Dives] who was governor of Abindon, feld as many elms of his there as was near worth fower score pound, and I hearing of went to Abindon, and the governor tok me prisoner, & told me he had my Masters Rents asigned to him, and charged me not to borow a peny of them; and in the year 1645 Sir William Campion (?) governor at Borstall, feld his trees in his grounds to the value of twentie ponds, and feched divers of tenant, horses and cartes from claydon, and when I did goe in hopes to redeeme them, they told me if they had my master they would slater him, for he was worse then those slaine beasts, for he hop [holp] to slay his own father; and in the said year 1645 they came to my house, took away my horses, & shot one of my children, and when I went for Recompense, they told me it were no mater if I were hanged for serving such a master, and threatened to kill me; and at Cromarsh in Oxfordsheare they feld most of his trees, and at Fifield at least fiftie ponds worth of elmes to mend their garison at Wallingford in the year 1644, and said if my master were there, they would cut & fell him as they did the trees : and about that tim those tenants sent their horses to claydon in hopes of saftie, and the lord Birone tuck them all away, and I went after him for them, and they told me, my Master was a Rebell and wood not her me speak. Those horses were well worth neer a hundred ponds. Sir, these be sad storeys to relat to you, but being he is lick to suffer on the contrary sid, which I kno him innocent in, and for him to suffer for suffering such hard mesure before—I will leave you to judge of his cause and pray to God to relese him, which is the hartie desire of your humble sarvant Will : Roades.

'Sir if all these partickulars were made knon to the lords of the counsell I doe fully assur my self they would not let my master suffer by a Decimation, for all these partickulars are treue above mentioned.' A formal affidavit was afterwards signed by Roades, in which he told of a second visit to his house, when 'his stables & Lodging Roomes were pulled downe, and of the expense his master had incurred in repairing them, and he quotes another of the brutal Royalist jokes, that rankled in the memory of the sufferers for years after ; when at Claydon the soldiers drove away the poor people's cattle, and he went 'to intreate for them, they told him if his Master were boyled as the Beefe, ti were noe matter.'

Cary writes to rally her brother on his depression of spirits : 'I am confident you will be exemted from March 10, 1656 this new taxation for I can not hear of any in your condistion falls under this payment, & I hope you will not fare the worst of this kingdome . . . however if this storme should not blow over, bot light uppon a rong parsone, yet sartainly it will not fall so boysterously over you more then over others, as to put you unto so great a fitt of mallincolly as to forsake the oneing [owning] of claydon. The same complaint came from other counties, that men who had been falsely accused of delinquency in former years, were decimated as if they had never proved their innocency.' 'Mr. Darcye,' a landowner in Surrey, who like Sir Ralph had always sided with the Parliament, had 'his estate taxed at a tenth by Major Generall Kelsey.' The only pretence for this was that 'in the yeare 1644 upon misinformation that he was absent from his house some seizure was made of his rents by the committee of Surrey, which afterwards appearing to bee a mistake, the said seizure was immediately taken off.' Yet when this mistake was brought up against him twelve years after, the commissioners told him 'that hee being already assessed it was not in theire power to give him reliefe,' but that he could appeal 'to the Protector and his Councell.'

Sir Ralph's friend, 'Anne Viscountesse Wilmot,' and Countess of Rochester,[1] was also petitioning the Protector, with a very complicated grievance. Her first husband, Sir Francis Henry Lee,[1] son of Lady Warwick, belonged to a staunch Parliamentary family; her second husband, Lord Wilmot, was an equally strong Royalist, and was ordered to send in a particular of his estate in order to be decimated. His wife strongly objected to her jointure lands in Bucks, which represented good honest Puritan money never tainted with malignancy, being mixed up with Lord Wilmot's estates and his misdeeds. 'And in regard her said husband hath noe Interest in her said Joynture Lands' Lady Wilmot begged the Protector to stay 'all further proceedings touching or concerning the same & to discharge your petitioner from further trouble or attendance.

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[1] Lord Wilmot had been created Earl of Rochester by Charles after the battle of Worcester, but this title was not recognised by the Government.

Mun is on his way home; Dr. Morley's son is travelling with him from the Hague. 'Mon âme se repaist de plaisantes fantaisies par l'espoir de jouir bientost de vostre veüe.' April 25, 1656 He arrived on the 8th of May; Sir Ralph, with nervous caution, desired him to conceal his lodging, and sent his letters to 'Mr. Webster, a haberdasher.' The Doctor laughed at 'a secret now generally knowne,' for Mun had run up against 'my Lord Sherard's man, who knew him in Holland,' and Sir Ralph went up to town to meet him.

Mrs. Westerholt got ready 'the orange chamber and the closett' for their return home; 'and if I had but sope that I might Wash,' she wrote, 'I woulde, when that were done, wish your worship at Claidon with all my heart.' This dearth of household stores, the result of Sir Ralph's virtuous retrenchments after the decimation, would have confirmed Doll Leeke in her oft-expressed opinion, that a man could never manage his own housekeeping. The sugar he had sent down was 'fitter to spende in the house, then to preserve with,' and the housekeeper was fain 'humbly to desire your worshipp to buy any powder sugar for preserving that may be very white, otherwise I shal have noe credit by doeing any fruite with it, nor your worshipp be pleasd in seeing it come to your table.' She is almost without currants & raisins, and the glasses sent down for preserving are too expensive and not suitable for the 'chery marmalad.' She wants 'glasses without brims, being they are not sent to the table, & those are not soe soone broke, I desire to have 2 dozen of them.' Mrs. Westerholt was hard to please in this matter. Doctor writes: 'Nor Sis. Sherard, nor wife, nor Elms nor glassman could understand y^{r} patterne for y^{r} glasses, soe y^{u} are to find out a new project.'

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[1] Vol. i. p. 247.

Though Sir Ralph told Mun that he was stopping all his building, he had previously ordered 150,000 bricks to be made for him; and it was impossible at once to discharge his workmen. They gave the careful housekeeper a good deal of trouble in his absence. She had just sent Sir Ralph a lordly pasty, containing three dozen and five pigeons, and she took the opportunity of airing her woes. 'Sir, this last weeke cam Pursell the carpenter and his men, he only himselfe sate in the house, but all his men come in for their beere, and that not seldom nor

June 9, 1656

in small proportions; and by theire example all the workmen doe soe worry me for drinke, that though I many times anger them, and hourly vex myselfe, with deniing one or other of them, yet wee spend a great deale of beer—three barells the last weeke. Sir, I beseech you be pleased to let me know your will, whether they shall have it still or noe, for I am very loath, alonge with the trouble that I have with them, to have that of the feare of youre displeasure. I wish with all my heart that your worshipps businesse woulde permit your presence here. Sir, I received a note to have Ralph Roads look to the gutters, I have spoke to him, and hee will doe it, but it did not raine in at all, the last time, of raine.'

While Sir Ralph's fate still hung in the balance, and he was 'daily haunting the council,' the Steward discovered, to his horror, that a serpent lurked amongst Sir Ralph's apple trees. His own gardener was telling stories against him, which were already the subject of village gossip, and might readily spread to Aylesbury.

The origin of the gardener's discontent was a true Briton's dislike of a foreign fellow-servant, whom he wrongly supposed to be a Papist. Roades writes how 'he fell upon Misho . . . & had killed him . . . had he not been reskewed. Misho he tells me that Jayn and Mrs. Aris' mayd and the gardener did take a lader that Misho has to tie the aples, & put one part of one sid, and one part on the other sid the pailes, and so went over, as

June 14, 1656

they pretended to look after a turkey's nest, but it was at night and Misho in the hous, and they did not aske him for the Key of the gate, but he comming in with his gun found them there, but his gun was not charged, but Misho told the gardener he did ill to goe over the pailes with that lader to teach people to doe so, but might as well have asked for the key, and then the gardener told him he had more to do ther then he had: and pressently puld him by the haire and scratched his face, and by report, beat him very much, took away his gun and told him you . . . did contrary to the lord protectors order, and when I told him if he weere afrayd of Misho, he might a kep the gun in his chamber or gave it M^rs^ Westerholt or my selfe, he told me you would not anser the keping of it in your hous, and as for using of you ill in words, I hear it is his continuall talke, dronck or sober, before and sence: that you kept your son apurpos in holand be cause you might the better send money to your son as he might send it to the prince, which he sais he can prove; and that you kep papisis in your hous, and keep showlibord playing and nin pins with other games in your house on Sondaies contrary to order, and this he will justifie. Mrs. Westerholt tells me as well as John Andrewes, and my son Miller . . . it is the whole towne talke I veryly beleeve he is a very dangerus fellow and cares not to tell a lie nether doth he fear an oath. I need not tell you what to saie to him but I beleeve good wordes will be best for the anger of such a felow is lick the radging of a mad dogg that cares not how he bits nor who. This morning being sondaie I went and spoak with him and told him you send to me to tell him you would have him com up to london to you . . . I told him I would bespeak a place in the waggon but he told me he would not goe to you, he knew you ware angry with him, but he cared not for it, and that you hiered him to doe his sarvice in the contrie and if you had anything to saie to him you might send to him your mind as well as send for him or stay tell you com downe. I told him my busines was most in the contrie but yf you sent for me I should goe without disput and then he told me . . . with divers idle words he thought it was to part with him, he told me he had been with you a quarter of a year and yf you turned him of you should pay him for half a year and that no sarvant of yours should pay him for he scorned to receve his wages from any hand but yours. Alas poore man I pray god give him grace with humilitie.'

Mrs. Westerholt further reports that the gardener threatened the woman at the village public-house when she refused him drink, that 'she shoulde not sell ale long, & though she thought Sir Ralph Verney would upholde here, *hee* (which was all the title he bestowed) should have enough to do to save himselfe.' This report annoyed and alarmed Sir Ralph extremely. It was important that his son should appear with him to disprove any possible complicity with Royalist plots at the Hague, if questions should be asked by the Commissioners. Mun, meanwhile, heedlessly intent on his own diversions, wrote to his father that 'having by good fortune met with an old acquaintance of mine, one Mr. Hayre, Sir Ralph Hayre his brother, I could not denye the accompanying of him into Norfuck,' and vanished for some days, leaving no address. The gardener, however, went away very quietly. Roades gave him 1*l.* more than his due, and the Parish Clerk undertook to water the flowers and 'turf the court.' Sir Ralph heard from Ball, the nurseryman, of another man 'most Emenent of any about, for neat houses, Mellons, Sparragus and Colyflowr, & all other ordenary things, tho' for graftinge he hath not much judgm^t.' His wages are not given, but Mrs. Elin Tippinge gives us some notion of what they would be, as her young gardener 'is tempted by great Squire Lea of Hartwell for 16*l.* a year, and he hath even given us the go-by, & put me in much wrath, for I had gotten many laborers & thought to have made my garden so fin, & I am now defeatted.'

Sir Ralph's affairs are going badly. After some six or seven weeks' delay, 'the Protector & Councell' deliver him over once more to the tender mercies of the Major-General and the County Commissioners, 'to discharge or continue the Decimation as they thinke fit.' 'I laboured all I could,' he writes, 'to receive my doome from hence, but twas not their Lordshipps pleasure, it should bee soe.' He writes to **July 3, 1656** Lady Gawdy: 'I am this day going downe uppon the businesse of my Decimation, but with soe little hopes of good successe, that were not Alisbery soe very neare to Claydon, I should scarce goe thether about it, unlesse it were to give an oppertunity to the Major Generall & Comissioners to make their injustice shine more clearly, which you may guesse to bee a needlesse errand being most men are already fully satisfied in that point. The coachman stormes & vowes hee cannot staye a minute longer,' and so Sir Ralph's complimentary ending is perforce cut short.

Some alternative seems to have been given him which he was unable to accept, the decimation was finally confirmed ; and he was forbidden to come to town for six months. 'It is as well a marke of your virtue as of your misfortune,' writes Lady Gawdy, 'and such as are so accompanyed with honour may bee received with les regrett.'

Public interest now centred in the coming Parliament, which would either confirm or destroy the authority of the Major-Generals. Dr. Denton writes from Overton, Cheshire, where he is visiting the Alports : 'Here is a new Major Generall come downe, his name is Bridges, & I heere, labours to have a great influence upon elections, & that he hath laid a good foundation to his minde in Staffordshire as he passed. Its thought he will misse of his ayme however. There is like to be strong & stout canvassinge. The sheriff & justices at the last sessions pitched on 4, to which they will unanimously adhere. Sir Wm. Brereton he stands on his owne leggs & labours might & maine, & the Major he August 15, 1656 intends to prefer others. Bradshaw writt not to be nominated nor chosen. Steel was in nomination, but hearinge he is designed for Ireland he is laid by. . . . The High Sheriffe hath beene here these 2 daies, & we goe to his house on tuesday sennight, the knight will be chosen on Wenesday next & then you shall heare more. I heare Roles & Barcklay [' the last of the old judges '] are both dead. Here hath beene a strange rumor of the securinge of Vane, Bradshaw, Ludlow & others, but noe certainty, a little newes doth well here. All to all Vale, Yours Wm. D.' He has seen a mountain ash for the first time. ' Here is a fine wild ash (which the South yeelds not) which beareth red berries (now ripe & last longe on the trees) as pleasant to looke uppon as cherries trees, only the fruit little bigger then hawes, the usuall ornament of flower potts & windowes of these parts. I am promised setts of som ; if I can gett them I will send som to old Raph the Provider General.'

Sept. 6, 1656 In September Sir Roger writes from London of the new House of Commons that ' some were for the taking in peices the whole body of the law.'

Sept. 3, 1656 Penelope writes from Oxfordshire: ' There is such breaking up of houses and binding the people in there beads that a maid Sarvant as usally did ly in my hous will not stay in it when I have Fawler, and I ever had a man that lay in the hous bysids, but that will not satisfy them the time to com.'

Sept. 29, 1656 Sir Ralph had also been visited. ' My house was lately searched by a captaine and 12 Troopers who obeyed theire orders but I must needs say with civility enough.' Lady Gawdy has not 'bine yett so much considerd as to have such potent viseters,' & she hopes they may never return to his prejudice.

On the 30th Sir Roger writes again: 'The Parliament will take the grand businesse of the warr with Spaine into consideration and conclude it to be justly begunn, & necessary to be prosecuted. We have all reason to endeavour unity amongst ourselves since we are to be so farr engaged abroad against the common enemie the K. of Spaine and C. Steward. . . . If you think of a way wherein I may serve you, I trust you will looke upon me as I am, wholly yours; you know I am not fitt for publique employment or to act openly upon any interest, but if you pleese to make use of me as a subsollicitor you shall finde me more faithful than able for your service.' Oct. 6, 1656

Sir Ralph took his decimation sadly to heart, and he was troubled by an eruption on his leg and thigh which would not heal. He was deluged with advice by his lady friends. Doll wished him to drink asses' milk while he sat in a bath of it up to the neck, for two hours twice a day; a less tedious remedy is a lotion 'so violant a drop would fech of the skin wher it touched'; and a dreadful old woman is recommended who has an infallible 'oyntment for yumurs.' He wants to go to town to petition the House, but his friends think that 'it is not safe for the foxe

Oct. 29, 1656 to come to the Court.' Dr. Denton tells him that 'J. Russell' was arrested on somewhat similar business, and that though he 'was in y^e Tower but 3 daies it cost him 60*l*. Roger is labouring, though privately, yet very hartily by a good hand with Major
Nov. 7, 1656 F[leetwood]. . . . I need not tell you he is zealous in it, he was with me this morning to be informed of matters of fact, soe I showed your Petition. . . . 'Tis 11 a clock & high time to bid you good night.'

Sir Roger amidst the 'continual vexations' of the session wishes Sir Ralph 'all the happiness that a Country life may afforde, and that I know by experience to surpass all that this Citty can give'; but rural life had its own peculiar crosses. Sir Ralph
Nov. 24, 1656 presents his 'service to M^r Frem: Gaudy, & for his better encouragement in Planting tell him this last weeke one villanous Cow in one night spoyled my whole Nursery; in earnest I had rather have given ten pounds, soe greate a fondnesse of these Trifles hath Yours etc. etc. R. V.'

Dec. 8, 1656 Uncle and Aunt Isham have been staying at Claydon, and Sir Ralph is visiting Edmund Denton. He writes from Hillesden: 'To Trusty Roger,—I hope you received a letter from me of my acknowledgments for your greate care and harty endeavour to free Pilgarlick from Decimation. I must now redouble my thanks, for though the successe hath not answered your expectation, yet that cannot lessen my obligation. God forbid that your friendshipp & kindnesse should bee blotted out of my memory by the injustice & severity of other men. Noe Sir tis clearly otherwise with mee.'

The Doctor has his joke about the Decimation Bill which the friends of the Government pushed on while their opponents were spending Christmas with their families. 'Decimac̄on had but a poore Xtmas dinner no sweet plum broath nor plum pye, for they chose that day to bring it in when armiger was in patinis, & soe it gott the liberty to be entertained (by) the house, though Glyn yet spake stoutly agst it but was outvoted by 20^{ty} voices, if the house fill, much good may be hoped for, if not, actum est.'

Dec. 29, 1656

Doll Leeke writes: 'I fancied you might have come this crismus but you have so totally forgot it that you do not compliment us so much as to wish your self with us. I wold be a littell severe but that I wold have you beleve that I have altred that part of my nature, and have resolved to be all my life kind, for now I am so ould ther is no dainger in profising it.'

Dec. 10, 1656

William Gape writes: 'Mally thanks you for your chine, variety maketh pleasure & therefore your cold one is so well accepted.'

The 7th of January, 1657, Sir Roger writes: 'Newes heer is but little . . . ther was a Debate in the Parl^{t} this day about a reading of a bill the second time, for the Continuance of Decimations; but after many speeches pro and con: it was put of till tomorrow morning, and that the L^{d} Clapoole (if I write not his name right, I am sure you know whom I mean) spake against the Bill, & was for the casting of it out; L^{d} Branghall, M^{r} Drake, Trevore, Whitlock of the same minde, & accordingly expresst themselves. Luke Robinson & Maj: Gen: Desburrough stiff for the bill.' 'I am where I was, and as willing and as unable to serve you as ever. . . . The Parl^{t} is adjourned till Munday next by reason of the Speaker's illness; at which time if they doe meet, the Decimation is like to take up that day and to admitt of a warm debate. I presume you have heard of the villanous plott at Whitehall, I wish the plotters were discovered & executed; the Lord preserve you & me from all such wicked men.' Dr. Denton writes that 'Decimation is still sub Judice, there is great arguinge p. & con; & it is hoped & beleeved that it will downe. A plot there was for certaine & that a desperate one, as to the person of the Protector, but to the Joy of the Cavalry not one Casualtie in it, that I can heare of as yett. It was acted Inter Don Alon: di Cardinez & some Levellers.'

Jan. 15, 1657

Jan. 22, 1657

The long debate continued to excite attention; on the 29th of January Sir Roger writes: 'I am informed that the Parl^{t} satt till about 7 at night, upon the bill of Decimation & yet did rise without a question [*i.e.* a division]. This morning they are to proceed upon it againe, & I think it will be the 6th or 7th time upon that account. Some reports doe speake, but its to be hoped not true, that an Army Remonstrance is like to appeare this day, & I presume cheifly upon that occasion. The Lord direct them for the best.' Sir Roger, as an old member of the

Long Parliament, had seen enough of Army interference.

Dr. Denton writes the same day: 'Decimation was stoutly canvassed yesterday, but noe result as yet; a remonstrance or petition is expected from the Army.' By the evening he is able to add: 'This day the Major Generall's Bill had its doome, not only laid aside, but rejected uppon the Question; att which they doe not a little storme. If your money be not paid, I ghesse you will consider of it before you doe pay it againe.' Sir Roger also writes: 'The Parl^t hath passed two votes this afternoone as to the Bill of Decimations; the one is that it should not be read the second time; the other that it should be rejected; but neither passed without a division.' Dr. Denton writes on the 13th of February: 'I heare the Major Generalls are bringinge in a Bill themselves to take away Decimations & then have all title & succession which some beleeve will take effect; they ayme att a test, by oath of abjuration or some other way.' Jan. 29, 1657

Sir Roger writes again: 'On Monday last a bill or Remonstrance or what you please to have it, was brought into the Parl^t by Sir Christopher Pack, part of it to this purpose that the prot[ector] be desired to assume the title of K: that he should nominat his successor, that the Parl^t should be Judge of their own members; that no taxes shall be imposed on the people, but only by Parl^t; that ther shall be another house, but neither named Lords or Upper House in the bill, but only another house, & as I am informed Feb. 26, 1657 the number should not exceed 70—good disciples I hope all—& 40 to be the lowest number for a house. Tomorrow a fast is appointed to be kept, wher the prayers but not advise of 5 Ministers are desired, for they are not to preach but pray. The men are to be—Owen: Manton: Caroll: Nye and Gelaspie a Scotchman: thus much for newes, for the great feast & banquet with which the Parl^t was most sumptuously entertained at Whitehall on fryday last, I know the whole kingdome almost rings of it.' 'The bill for Kingship goes on,' Dr. Denton writes, 'notwithstanding Lambert is highly against it, not without some passion, others say peevishness; Wolseley & Fiennes for it.'

Feb. 26, 1657

March 12, 1657

Sir Roger continues his report: 'Sir, . . . you mention'd a vote not longe since made in reference to the M. Gen. which you desired to have. I can not give it you in the same words as it was voted, but I shall give you the sense of it. As for the Major Gen^{ls} if they were wounded at it, it was thorow the sides of Decimation, the bowells wherof were peirced by a Negative vote of the par^{lt}: viz: that the bill which was brought in to confirme that peice of Tyranny should not be so much as cōmitted, and positively rejected. The Major Gen. were not so much as named, but sublata causâ you know what followed. I suppose that the 6 mounths banishment is now expired: I am sure I am allmost ready to expire my last, being so long detained in so bad a place from so good company as your self, but I hope the time of redemption is not farr of: that ther shall be another house to give check to this I presume you are not ignorant, and the Maj. Gen: are as like Lambs upon this account as they were Lyons upon the other, for they expect some amends by this, expecting to be in the number of those that shall be elected Lords by the L^{d} Prot. for that house. Diverse of the Courtiers are pleased to absent themselves from the parl^{t} upon this occasion, for they are ashamed some of them to appeare for that cause against which they have been formerly so violent, and to speake against it were to speake against their own conscience, or at least wise interest. Excuse my length and in short conclude me (though but weake and unable to serve you) yet entirely Yo^{r} own.'

Sir Ralph had no lack of warm congratulations, and we can almost hear Moll Gape's loud hearty voice as she leant over the good apothecary's shoulder and dictated her message: 'Molly rejoyceth that the sixe months are expiring, and doubly rejoyceth because shee shall then see S^{r} Ralph, all of him, his whole tenne parts reunited, not a collop left behinde to feede y^{r} Dawes, yett shee doth not wish that what they have already may choake them & therein disagrees from S^{r}, Y^{r} true servant, W^{M} GAPE.'

And thus Cromwell's military tribunals were suddenly swept away. It is impossible to read these detailed accounts of the vexation and expense they brought upon individuals, uniting men of such opposite politics as Sir Justinian Isham and Sir Ralph Verney by a common grievance, without realising how much they did, in a Puritan county like Bucks, to reconcile the country squires on the Parliamentary side to a Stuart restoration. There were few indeed who would not have joined with Thomas Stafford, when he made it his 'dayly petition to our heavenly Father, and gracious protector' that He would grant us 'a speedy deliverance out of the power of the Major Generalls, and restore us to the protection of the common law.'

Walker & Boutall Ph. Sc.

Edmond Verney

from a painting at Claydon House.

CHAPTER IX.

MUN AND HIS LOVE-MAKING.

1656–1660.

> 'But if she cannot love you, sir?'
> 'I cannot be so answer'd—'
> 'Sooth but you must.'
> *Twelfth Night.*

In May 1656 Edmund Verney returned home, a young man in his twentieth year. He had an affectionate and pleasant temper, he was tall and handsome, but somewhat clumsily and heavily built, and his awkwardness of manner and slovenliness of dress were a great trouble to his precise and gentlemanlike father; 'Much more will be expected from Mun,' he wrote, 'than from such youths as have gonn noe father then Oxford or Cambridg, or at most the Inns of Court.'

Never had Mary been more sadly missed than in this fresh chapter of the family life, when Sir Ralph had to make a home and a career for his eldest son. No one welcomed him back with the womanly love which mother and sister would have lavished upon him, no one was there to see that in taking a son's place at Claydon, his habits did not clash with his father's ; and so the home-coming was not as successful as it might have been, after the joy of the first meetings and greetings had subsided. Sir Ralph himself had been an ideal son, never thinking of his own amusements, if he could share in Sir Edmund's duties and lighten his cares. Edmund arrived in the midst of the worries and vexations of the Decimation, but it did not occur to him that these things were any concern of his. He looked upon himself as the heir to a fine estate, and he felt annoyed when every request for money was met with a dismal recital of his grandfather's debts, and the burdens under which Sir Ralph was groaning. Careless of expense, and ignorant of business, Mun was far from appreciating the sacrifices his father had made for his education, in the days of his greatest poverty, or how hardly he now raised the 20*l.* or 50*l.* which slipped through the son's fingers so rapidly.

Sir Ralph was full of large schemes for the improvement of Claydon, in which Mun took but little interest, and he thought, not unnaturally, that with less outlay in building and planting, his father might afford to give him a proper allowance, to enable him to be as well dressed, and as well mounted, as the other young sparks who splashed up the mud at a fashionable hour in Hyde Park.

Sir Ralph justified himself as a father and landowner always does under these conditions. 'As for my buildings, I see I have already lost one great part of the contentment I tooke in them, which was

Dec. 8, 1656

that you should perceive that what money I did expend, was layd out *to your advantage*, to make the house more handsome and convenient for you and yours . . . I must confesse I shall not debarre myselfe of any expence that I thinke moderate, to supply any extravagancies that you either have or shall committ, and yet, if any misfortune should befall you, noe man liveing should more readily and cheerfully suffer with and for you.'

The boy had his own vague ambitions too, although he rarely confided them to Sir Ralph :

'I do positively affirme,' he wrote to his intimate friend Dr. Hyde, 'that hetherto my father hath not given me any education whereby I might be rendered accomplisht in body and mind ; nay further, though I am naturally inclined to be that which the Italians call un Vertuoso, hee never did so much as countenance mee therein, but hath continually opposed me. Considering these premisses aforesaid my industrie will labour under a greate difficulty of acquiring a title above an honest elder brother, which now a dayes is accounted but little above a silly fellow, yet I think myselfe capable of deserving much better, and I hope without vanitie. . . . My father is courteous and kind enough to me . . . and seemes very well pleased with mee, and would be more yet, if I could dispose my humour to affect, what I hate, Rusticq matters and effeminate things—all which aforesaid I do contemplate with some wonder.'

The relations and friends had only one course to recommend in every letter written to welcome the lad of nineteen home; they wished that he might soon find a wife. Sir Ralph wearily reckoning up debts and interest, portions and mortgages, decimations and taxes (till he convinced himself that he had only 125*l.* a year to live upon) saw no way out of the family labyrinth except by his son's marriage with an heiress—maid or widow it mattered very little—but wealthy she must be, and she would be, of course, good. Of Sir Ralph's seven children two only were living, and after them Brother Tom was heir to Claydon; it was therefore a matter of dynastic importance to the large family circle that Edmund Verney should be suitably 'matched.' All the uncles and aunts began to bestir themselves, and Edmund's godmother, old Lady Warwick, who in a previous stage of existence had provided him with a silver porringer, and a light-blue figured satin coat, now produced a very young grand-daughter with a portion, as an eligible bride. Roades was not to be left out of the chorus of wellwishers: 'I am glad Mr. Edmund Verney is com safe to London. I pray doe me so much favour as to present my sarvice to him. I could wish I were as Abraham's sarvant to provide a Rebecka for him, but senc I am not worthy of such a calling, I will pray to my god to bless him with a Rebecka in nature if not in name.' The great matchmaker Aunt Sherard improves the occasion: 'My desir is that your son may meet with a good wife and a portion answerabal to your owne desires. . . . I

June 3, 1656

June 10, 1656

hope both your selfe and son hath soe much resone and religgon in you, that you will pries that which is most to be valewd, which is vertue.'

Mun took a languid interest in these projects ; 'si je me mariois,' he wrote, 'ce que je n'ai pas encore envie de faire, je veux premierement voir quelques choses ;' but when money was running low, marriage meant independence, as his father would be bound to make some separate provision for him, besides the promised wealth that his wife was to bring with her. So being 'fancy free' he was ready to leave the choice of the particular heiress wholly to his father ; 'mais je ne voudrois souiller mon sang, avec une creature de basse condition, pour avoir avec elle 100,000 livres de rente ; j'aimerois mieux chercher ma fortune par mon espee, avec une fille noble et vertueuse.'

After spending a few months at Claydon, Mun announced his wish to live in London till he married ; Sir Ralph regretted but did not oppose it ; he himself was often up and down, and there were relations in town ready to be kind to his son. 'Methinkes Mun lives wonderful orderly here,' the Doctor reports. 'I doe not see that any one comrade hath been with him since he came. He keepes at home all day till candle light, and then we have his comppany till bed time and much more free and merry then formerly.' But Sir Ralph was uneasy to hear that at Mrs. Bellinger's, of the sign of the Eagle and Child (his lodgings near the Old Bailey), Mun was known by the aliases of Theodore Berry and Brewer, and that he had been Dec. 27, 1656 heard of at Woolwich, and in Hertfordshire, when Sir Ralph had known nothing of such expeditions. The father complained that his indulgence was only abused. 'Mun, I see the same sunn that softens Wax, hardens clay, and, since tis soe (to be short with you), I shall considder you as little as you doe me;' the son retorted that he had asked for nothing unreasonable, 'mais c'est que vostre naturel est tel, que vous aimez à prolonger les choses.'

Matters had reached this pitch when, on Christmas Day, 1656, the foolish lad wrote his father a letter 'that had been better unwritt;' Sir Ralph justly described it to be 'as false as insolent.' Deeply pained, he sent it with his answer to Dr. Denton, begging him to forward the one, and burn the other 'presently, for I would not have his folly knowne to anybody.' Dr. Denton had no weak indulgence for wrong-doing, but his sense of humour and his habitual self-command prevented his blundering into mere bursts of passion. Mun's letter was no surprise; the lad had shown it to him when he had been pouring out his grievances. 'Being horribly wroath,' Doctor writes, 'I did tell him that it was impossible but that you should highly resent it. . . . I am thus far beholdinge to him, he heard me patiently and I think doth not take it ill from me though I spare him as little as I doe others. . . . I had a very kind letter from him last night—but maugre all his courtshipps its my business this day to study ugly bitter currish things to say to him at night, for if I understand him

Jan. 21, 1657

rightly, he is soe to be treated, and will worke more on him then great reason if contrary to his sense. Courage, Mons^{r} ; you may be happy togeather for all this ; it's but a peccadillo, and if you master him here he is your owne for ever.'

Dr. Denton knew that the father, though his heart ached with love and disappointment, was in danger of driving his son from him by the stern expression of his righteous displeasure. He pleaded with him to treat Mun liberally in money matters, and said all the kind and wise things he could on the lad's behalf. But Mun must have had a bad time of it when they met that night 'at a taverne.' The doctor spoke to him plainly about his wrong courses, and pictured to him what would have happened if ever his father had dared to speak so wrongly and disrespectfully to his grandfather: 'after this rate was our discourse and yett . . . we parted very very lovingly.' Sir Ralph was not appeased, 'yet for his deare mother's sake I would gladly love him but hee will not let me,' said the poor wounded father. Dr. Denton spoke to Mun again: 'We had a smart bout last night till past 11 o'clock . . . his letter to you I hope will be full of douceur with out a stinge at the tayle of it. He had as good as I could give him, and I please myselfe to thinke I was cock of him and doe beleeve that now he wishes his finger had been in the fire when he writt it, yet I find it is a hard chapter to recant it.' Jan. 29, 1657

Edmund wrote the next day to his father: 'I am exceedingly afflicted to have said anything that hath caused your anger, wherefore if you vouchsafe to signifie the contrary by the next, you will make my hart leape for joy.'

Sir Ralph thought this a wholly inadequate apology; it was not his anger, but his son's misconduct that was in question. He wrote back stiffly:

Feb. 1, 1657

'When I see a submission and sorrow more suited to your crime, I thank God I can forgive it, though you have most highly and strangly provoked your Father. R. V.'

The little folded note, marked by Sir Ralph as 'returned to him undelivered,' lies now beside the doctor's letter. That unwearied peace-maker was bent upon winning for Mun a freer and more gracious pardon:

Feb. 5, 1657

'Seeing you left it to me,' he wrote, 'to keepe or deliver the letter, I cannot soe soone forgett the Councill I gave you—that if he wrote to you in such a way as that you might with Honour to Paternal dignity and power, embrace him againe without further ravellinge into the story of disagreement then to doe it, and to doe it hartily, and to returne him kindness even with London measure.' He warns his father that if he is to play 'Thomas Aquinas and distinguish nicely,' he will drive his son to justify himself. 'It is much the better way in my opinion to take every reasonable excuse to be friends without words . . . though he doth not tell mee soe, yett I know he must want money . . . he cannot live like a chamoleon, therefore let it be your glory to passe by offences and the sooner the more honorable. I have but this one touch more and I have done. Suppose you should stand uppon a submission more suitable to his crime, and he should not answere your expectac̃on, I will not aske you what can you doe to him (for I know you may do what you will) but what will you doe to him? You cannot but suffer with him: even your makinge of it publique will be a torment to you, and to take notice of it, and not goe through stitch with it, it will be an allay to your soveraignty. Go, kisse and be friends, which is the advice of W^{m} D.'

One or two loving notes had arrived meanwhile from Mun, anxious about his father's continued silence. Sir Ralph was not a man to forgive or forget easily; the very steadfastness of his nature was against it, but he could sacrifice his pride and his own opinion at the bidding of so true a friend: 'Well D^{r} you may doe what you will with me, and now you have a sufficient trial of it. I have written Mun another letter in another straine. I have not at all touched upon the businesse, for I confesse I could not doe it without some such sharpnesse as would not please you, therefore I rather chose to let it sleepe in silence.' He pours out to the doctor all the good advice he is not allowed to give his son, to whom 'God grant more witt and grace hereafter.' To Mun himself he writes affectionately and naturally, asking after his health, and about the trees he had ordered from Holland, promising to supply him with money, and abstaining

Feb. 9, 1657

from a single word of reproach for the past or of warning for the future. Mun felt the generosity of this silence, and Sir Ralph reaped his reward. Small differences of opinion arose again at times, when their interests seemed to be conflicting, but in the intimate and unbroken correspondence of the succeeding thirty-three years no such letter as the one 'that had better been unwritt' ever interrupted the affectionate relations between them.

Sir Ralph writes again cheerfully about a Feb. 15, 1657 favourite dog of Mun's at Claydon. 'Madame is courted by all the currs in Towne, she hath chosen the ugliest of them all, soe that shortly heere is likely to bee a rare Breed. Tell me how your Bodies fit you. Adieu, your loving father R. V.' Herr Schott had come to London from Utrecht, and the 'bodies,' at 30*l.* the pair, which Mun still wore, were the heaviest of his expenses.

The doctor is anxious to introduce Mun into good society, but he finds his clothes sadly shabby for polite visits. London is very full and smart, and 'tis generally talked and beleeved that within few daies the Protector shall be crowned. Mun is in most pitifull equipage, noe trappings at all.' Sir Ralph 'must supply and supply and supply, which is and shall be the burden of all my songs till it be done.'

Feb. 14, 1657 The doctor gives an amusing account of their visit to 'Barronet Luckyn's,' where the old man fell in love with the daughter of the house if the youth did not. 'Havinge beene longe harpinge uppon an unpleasant stringe, I cannot without joy tell you that I am labouringe for a more merry spinne, and to that end Mun and I and Mr. Mainell went last night about 6 o'clock, a wooinge, where in earnest I saw her that pleased me very more than ordinary well, yea extraordinary well. A pure virgin eighteen years old, tall, slender, straight, handsome, with as much sweetness in her aspect as I know not more anywhere, so that out of my small skill in phisiognomy, she must needs be well humoured. I saw her only in her hood, so that I cannot tell the colour of her haire, but I ghesse it to be towards flaxen ; if I might pick and choose among all I know at first sight, I know none like her. Before I parted I said what I thought was fitt, and told her that if Sir William Luckin had any services to command me, I would [wait] on him when and where he pleased.'

Sir William Luckyn of Messing Hall belonged to an Essex family, which had intermarried with the Grimstones, and Sir William's second son eventually succeeded to Gorhambury, where Sir Ralph and his wife had so often visited Lord and Lady Sussex. Lady Luckyn sent 'her sister on purpose to dine at the Doctor's to see Mun and make enquiry of him and of the estate.' Doctor 'gave her her lesson,' but 'has heard no more since.'

March 12, 1657

'Dear Ralph,' wrote Dr. Denton. 'In the first place I am of your opinion, that I am a person of very great judgment and soe great that I cannot erre, and now being seated in my infallible chaire, I tell you that I never thought I could doe any business soe well as your worshipp, especially your owne, as this of Luckin's is, and therefore a few instructions would have beene welcome, but let that passe. I have done what I can to keep the affaire alive, and that it may not chill on our part, my lady is still ill. Sir William's man told [my cozen] that his master would scruple at noe porcion betweene 5 & 10,000*l.*, soe hee could have an estate answerable, especially a good lusty, present maintenance. As to this point, a little of your mind would do noe hurt, and I shall not looke on it at all as any affront to my infallible judgment. You must never thinke in such a matter to truck and higgle with 100*l.* per an: for 1,000*l.* money. Certainly its fitt Mun should have one suit to make him looke like a gentleman, which he hath not. I thinke it would be a hard vy betweene his best suit and my serge d' 8d. Besides he has noe trappings,' he repeats, 'as hat, stockins, shoes, &c., en la mode.'

Sir Ralph does not rate his son's taste or his personal attractions very high—'Mun is not at all nice either in point of Bewty or of Breeding, nor must that woeman bee soe that marries him,' but fair as Miss Luckyn is, Mun is not to be stirred to any enthusiasm about her. He writes to his father: 'Mon oncle . . . m'amena dans Hoburne, et là me donna une veue innocente de la damoiselle, laquelle je n'ai pas voulu presumer de declarer, qu'elle me plaise ou deplaise, mais ai reservé cela à vostre

Feb. 19, 1657

jugement, car ma jeunesse n'est pas si folle et inconsiderée que d'entreprendre un acte de cette consequence sur ma cervelle seule.' Sir Ralph is pleased with this proper attitude of mind, and will 'the more willingly comply in anything that's reasonably desired; and if it bee your fortune to marry her, Feb. 23, 1657 God grant shee may bee as discreet and vertuous as your mother, and make you noe worse a husband then your loving father.' Mun would not, for his own choice, marry at present; he is seized with a desire to continue his education, and he sends for his music books from Claydon: 'J'ai pris Kersey pour m'enseigner la Richemetique, à 20^s par mois, et il ne vient que 3 fois la septmaine; les arts et les sciences sont bien cheres icy, ils ont besoing d'estre bonnes.' The same terms are charged by masters of the violin and the lute.

Lady Hobart now attacks Sir Ralph about Mun's clothes: 'I find your son very willing to March 5, 1657 conform to what you will and speeks with the hyist respeck of you that ever child did—but truly I am much ashamed to see how he goos, not at all lick your son, for he has nothing neu lick any other young man, neither hat nor clos, nor lining, for he has suits I dar say your man wars beter. Pray let me beg of you to let me mack him but 6 shurts, and half a dosen bands and cofs, and put him a letill into the town fason, but all shall be plan. and I will dres his legs, all ribens ar left at the brechis, so that is much saved. I will deu nothing progally [prodigally] but net, I will have but on sut. I hop if you war hear you wold as much dislick it as I deu; I look on him as the top of my kindred, and if he war one set in a net way I am confident he wold kep it, he wold lick it very wil war it got all to his hand, but his genios does not ly to lock after it; I am confident I could make him a sparck. He tacks anything I say wil, and I chid him for going so carlesly.' Sir Ralph has a crushing reply to make: 'Now for Mun's linnen, if hee weare his night sheirts when hee goes into company, neither he nor they can be commended by you or any other that sees them, but my Aunt Dr. knowes hee had very good whole sheirts and 2 halfe sheirts made within this moneth, which I am sure canot yet bee worne out; but if they were he hath not wanted money to supply any such defect. He hath had four score and ten pounds for this London journey, but cozen I pray doe not speake of this, for I know tis fitter and better to have mee thought a hard Father then hee a simple sonne.' To Dr. Denton he writes: 'Easter terme is the fittest time to buy him cloathes, for then all fashions alter; but if the wooing goe on sooner, then tis fit to cloath him presently.'

Dancing lessons from Moulin, a fashionable French master, are strongly recommended; Mun agrees—'affin d'avoir une meilleure mine et grace dans mon portement, et une meilleure addresse en abordant ou accostant une personne;' but his steel bodies make dancing almost too painful, although 'il n'y a personne qui puisse endurer une peine continuelle avec plus de patience que moy, car j'y ay esté accoustumé toutte ma vie.' The luckless lad has again run out of funds : 'A certain verse in holy scripture says, he who is wanting in one point fails in all—now I am in want of money, and certainly of everything else also.'

The young lady had not again been visited ; Lady Luckyn had been ill, and Edmund had been 'in the hands of Mr. Wiseman, the surgeon.' 'Truly I might compare my afflictions to Job's,' he wrote to his father, 'I have taken purges and vomits, pills and potions, I have been blooded, and I doe not know what I have not had, I have had so many things.' Sir William Luckyn is still inclined to treat : 'He seemes to be mighty fond of his daughter, and talks much of good allowance that they may live plentifully in their youth ;' but Dr. Denton writes 'that they have heard of your noble Bro. Tom, and that your sisters live but in a meane condicion, which is not very acceptable newes.' He is ordering a new suit for Mun 'at a very short warning'—'because he is to meet his Mrs. to-morrow in the Temple Garden,' and he is earnestly trying 'to mend his addresse which is but very indifferent,' as well as to put him 'in better cloaths.' Mun submits to the clothes, but fails to put on even the decent semblance of a lover ; 'I beleeve myselfe of that temper,' he writes to his own friend Dr. Hyde, 'that I can easily break off, without heavy sorrow, when I see I cannot love with any conveni-

March 5, 1657

March 20, 1657

ency,' 'I am of your opinion that you will not run mad for love,' Hyde replies, 'yet I must still tell you that it is a passion not to be played with, neither ought you to presume on your owne strength soe farre as to try it.' He advises that Edmund should agree with his father about settlements 'before you have loved and liked, or else vast and horrid inconveniences may follow.'

Sir Ralph, who might grumble, but who did everything that was generous, had commissioned the Doctor to buy his son a saddle-horse. Prices are very high in town. 'There is scarce anythinge worth looking uppon under 25*l*., and those but indifferent neyther but Doctor will prog and prowl.' He has been asked 100*l*. for a gelding, 'they pack them so fast into France that now it is but aske and have, even double their value.' He 'could fill a volume with stories of hunting after Jades in Hyde Park and Smithfield,' but he gets one at last for 16*l*. 10*s*. 0*d*.

June 18, 1657

July 4, 1657

It was a great happiness to Mun this summer to renew 'his infant acquaintance and friendship with Peg and Moll Eure,' and to be introduced to Peg Fust. Mun, standing about in Lady Luckyn's drawing-room, in a stiff new suit, beside the flaxen beauty in a hood, cudgelling his brains for compliments and unable to recall anything but the Doctor's caustic remarks upon his manners, was an utterly different creature from the Mun chatting with this trio of charming cousins, treated by them with frank, sisterly kindness. There are no dreadful 'treaties' now in the background, and he is quite at his ease. He and the Eure girls have a host of childish memories in common, of their life in France, which they recall to each other, and explain to Peg Fust. Margaret and Mary can give him the latest gossip from Blois, of Prevost, of Madame Testard, of the dancing-master and the Doctor, and others who were tiresome enough in reality, but as interesting to discuss afterwards as the characters of a story-book. They remember the fun of the fair with all Luce's prudent anxieties, and the pleasures of the grape-gathering; but they agree that there is nothing after all so delightful as an English summer, and plan frequent meetings at Claydon and Whitsondine. There is an exchange of notes when the cousins separate, and Mun earnestly desires a continuance of the intimacy 'which began in ower most innocent and tender yeares.' The wilful beauty, Peg, 'Pussy's Mad Eure' as she calls herself, had just refused a very eligible suitor, but she chooses to be specially gracious to Mun. When we meet again 'wee will be passing merry; Peg Fust,' she adds, 'though it is not usuall with hir to adore strangers, tho very disarving, it (yet) realy she saith that ther was something of exterordinary sivility in you which makes her much glory in your acquaintance.' Such jokes are not at all in Mary's line, but she writes a proper little note of cousinly civility. 'Sir, I cannot but esteem it a very great honour to renew that acquaintance with you which time and far distance hath worne something out of our memories, but cannot blot out the obligations I have ever receaved from you, especially the last which I must ever owne as a very great favor and beseech you to bring these impertinencies as low as I would doe any thought of being lesse then, Sir, your most humble servant, Mary Eure.'

Miss Luckyn showing as little zeal as Mun did for any further interviews, Sir Ralph made another serious attempt at a 'match' for his son, and this time 'the not impossible she' was Alianora Tryon. Her ancestor, Peter Tryon, was a Protestant who had fled from Alva's persecution in the Netherlands. The girl's grandfather, Sir Samuel Tryon, made a baronet in 1620, bought the property of Halstead from old Sir Thomas Gardiner, Cary Verney's father-in-law, and was High Sheriff of Essex in 1650. His widow, Elizabeth Eldred, married Sir Edward Wortley, Lady Warwick's brother, and report said that as guardian Sir Edward had wasted the estate, and had arranged a marriage between his little stepson and his niece, Eleanor Lee, Lady Warwick's daughter by her first husband, for whom Sir Samuel had no liking. Two children, Samuel and Alianora, were born of this marriage.

Alianora, mercifully called Ellen or Nell in daily life, was staying with her young cousin, Sir Harry Lee (one of Margaret Eure's many suitors), and his mother, now Countess of Rochester. A visit to Ditchley was one of the happiest memories of Sir Ralph's childhood. It was in itself a liberal education for Mun to see the fine house and its treasures, and it was delightful to think of renewing such old intimacies. Sir Ralph was as much charmed with Mistress Tryon as the Doctor had been with Mistress Luckin. He wrote 'to the Countesse of Warwick. Madame,—Finding that the young Lady was come Aug. 10, 1657 to Ditchley on Tuesday the 28th [July] my selfe and sonne went thether to attend her, where we had soe free and favourable a reception both from my Lady Rochester and Sir Harry Lee that we stayed till the Mounday after; and, had I yeelded to my sonn's desires, wee had still been there. For he is soe much taken with mistress Trion that if you please to suffer him to bee her servant, he will ever acknowledge the favour. . . . The truth is, Madame, she is every way soe well accomplished, and carries her selfe soe well and soe discreetly (even beyond her age) that she hath already soe charmed us both. . . . I shall be confident that Heaven hath a perticuler blessing in store for mee and for my family, in providing such a person for my sonne; who though hee is noe courtier, nor noe complimentall man, yett I hope hee will endeavour by the reallity and constancy of his affection to make some recompence for his want of ceremonie; and if my care or kindnesse can contribute anything towards her happinesse, my obligations to your Ladyshippe will be a sufficient Tye, to make me doe my utmost, and (if it were possible), even beyond the power of, Madame, your most humble, most faithful, and most obliged servant, R. V.'

Beautifully balanced phrases, but a little premature. Lady Warwick replies at great length, with Aug. 25 real affection for 'Nell.' She first refers to 'that friendship that was many years begonne among us,' and continues, 'I finde by your letter that your selfe and sone have very good thoughts of my grandchild; I must thanke you for it, for i doubt she cannot desarve itt, being so yonge and having apparęde so lettill in the worlde, that she must nedes be wantinge in many things yett. I have righton to hur and tolde hur that i very much lyke of this mach for hur. I should not ventir hur so sone into the worlde but that I am confident you will supply hur in all that wants, and be by your advise and councell bouth father, mother and all, for she is younge and I hope of so good an nature that you may fram hur to what you can desire. P.S. My daughter Rochister sath as much good of your sone as can be sade, and I hade a letter from my grandchilde, and I find she lykes him very will but hath not confidence i believe to till mee she is in love with him, but I presume hur lykeinge will increse daily, . . . your sone cannot but bee very good, cominge from cuch a stoke of goodness.' Aug. 29 My Lady Rochester is equally cordial 'For your sonne I may say it without flattering him, hee appeares too mee so excellent a young man, and carried himselfe with that prudence and discretion all the while of his being at Dichley both to his M^{rs} and everybody els, that hee must in justice gaine both my high esteeme and all that doe belong too mee; you are strangly hapy in him and truly I hope you wille be in her when she is yours.'

In the beginning of September, a childish little letter, much disfigured by blots, arrived from the young lady in which she tells 'Mr. Verney' that he has rated her merits too highly, 'yet I must needs say I see soe much of integrity in all your professions, this littell time I have knowne you, that I am bound to confes I have reson to acknoledg you have obledg mee to bee, sir, your friend and servant, Elen Tryon.'

Sir Ralph has ordered Mun some more courting clothes, the Doctor has chosen a suit; 'there are other fasshioned Ribands worn beside these, but fitt for none but footmen or a Morrice dauncer, and would not have pleased grave Mons^r Mun, and therefore I gave my vote for these.' Edmund is honestly anxious to play his part, but he does not hurry back to Ditchley; there were no memories of Blois to facilitate conversation with Alianora, and the 'homekeeping' girl had but 'homely wits.' All through the summer the details of the marriage settlements were being discussed between Sir Ralph and Mr. John Carey, who conducted the business on the lady's side; there is a whole bundle of papers at Claydon of proposals and counter-proposals; and among them Sir Edward Wortley's promise 'to give my neece Ellenor Tryan, my Wife's Grandchilde, five hundred pounds, and a hundred pounds a yeare for five yeares,' her eventual portion being 5,000*l.*

Sept. 3. 1657

In October, after a very sickly summer, Sir Ralph has his house full of guests; 'you need not invite man, woman, child nor horse to Claydon,' wrote the

Doctor, 'they'l come without sending for.' Sir Ralph writes to Mr. Carey to excuse Mun's absence from 'his mistress.' Oct. 13 'I have had very many of my kindred heere for 10 or 12 daies together, and divers of them not having seene my sonne since his infancie pretend they came now heather purposely to be acquainted with him, so that he is still theire prisoner heere, or else he had not been such a stranger at Ditchley. Yesterday one coachfull went away, but returne againe next weeke, and then I beeleeve they will be gon togeather, in the meane time I hope his stay heere will not bee misinterpreted by any, since as the case stands it cannot hansomly bee avoyded.' Alionora's peace of mind was not disturbed. 'For Mistress Tryon,' writes Mr. Carey, 'I can discover nothing of her mind against what is desired by your selfe and us heare, only she is youngue and not so fixt as persons of more yeares. I therefore much mind not every little picket of hers.'

Mrs. Sherard had another heiress in reserve, in her own county, should more genteel matches fail: 'an ordinary man's dafter; her father was a kind of a farmer but he hath given her a kind of breeding, as I hear he hath had her taught to sing, and to play, and to dance, but I beleeve it is all olde fationed. Her father will give her five thousand pound, and hath but on dafter more, and she is sickly and never licke to mary, and if not, shee will have more than enouf, for it is beleved her father is worth above 30 thousand pounds, and dooth daily incres in welth.

I hear shee is not but of a very good disposition.' Cousin Drake has another project: 'Here is a match for your sonn, Mr. Wilson's daughter of Surrey (formerly a cittizen) that I think worthy your consideration; they offer 5,500*l.*'

The autumn passed away, and the fashionable world was beginning to think of going up to town for the winter season. Mrs. Sherard allowed Peg and Mall to accept 'Queen Katherine's' hospitable invitation to spend it with her in Covent Garden. The meetings with Mun were soon resumed, and Peg wrote to Sir Ralph that they only needed his good company to be quite happy. 'Dr's Nancie,' aged 17, was not the least merry of the party, and the signatures of the four young people occur together as witnesses to a bond signed at the Doctor's house.

MARGARET EURE.	ANNE DENTON.
EDMOND VERNEY.	MARY EURE.

Nancy had attracted a suitor a year before, but nothing had come of it but one of the Doctor's jokes; he wrote to Sir Ralph: 'We had need call a councell for marryinge and givinge in marriage, you for your sis, she for hers, and I for mine, who am earnestly sollicited for my girle by one Mr. Piggott, for his son who is of Graies Inne . . . his estate is within a mile of Newport in Shropshire.' Nov. 20, 1656

Mrs. Sherard was too careful a mother to allow her daughters to go out in London, even with their Uncle and Aunt, without giving minute directions concerning them. For all rules of conduct she refers them to Sir Ralph, whose standard of taste and propriety she rightly considered a much higher one than Mrs. William Denton's. She has no anxieties about the gentle Mary, whose manner repels suitors, and who, with her great affection for Peg, is content to wait upon her sister's triumphs. But for Peg she entreats Sir Ralph to 'order hir as you thinke fit. I woold not by any means parswad hir to any as shee licks not—but pray tacke hir off of saying shee will and then shee will not, for soe shee did about Str[ickland]. I know non can manig hir lick you, and shee will bee free and tell you her mind. I can say but as I did befor, I leave her holly to your selfe and the D^r^ for to treat of the conditions, and shee to ples hir selfe in the man. I know shee will loocke for a good estate, else I should not leave it soe holy to hir.' **Nov. 16, 1657**

Peg Eure's 'she will and she will not' had already brought her family into trouble. Lord Strickland was 'highly dissatisfied' with the breaking off of the alliance with his kinsman. Lord Eure took up his quarrel; and was very 'fierce;' 'it seems he fell foul of the D^{r} in open coorte,' and they had a 'smart bout.' But it was so difficult to quarrel with the Doctor that they made it up again at their next meeting. Mrs. Sherard still favoured the Strickland suit; 'The greatest advantig of all,' she writes, 'is thay air extream good, which I dow more value then all the other convenienceys for I dessyer to mach my children wher they may have examples of pyatey, for the world is very bad, and youth is apet to goe astray.' She considers that Peg has treated Mr. Strickland badly. 'I have not disgestid the unhandsome breacking off of that mach, althoe my owne inocense was such as nothing can be more then it.' Sir Ralph had always favoured Robert Cotton's suit, and Luce, who had known his devotion to Peg at Blois, 'is a maine stickler' for Cotton. The young man himself found Mrs. Sherard's 'admirable Daughter soe much improved since I sawe her last in France as I finde that that affection which I thought to bee extraordinarie greate, was but the beginning of a much more violent one.' He had been allowed to visit Whitsondine in the autumn of 1655, but Mrs. Sherard had never fancied him. 'We aier off of Cotton,' she writes; 'wee may ingage in som other plas without acceptiones.' Meanwhile 'Mistress Eure hath declared, not only against M^r^ Strickland, but against all other that have father or mother, or have binne contrary to the side her father was of,' in the war, and Luce begs Sir Ralph to do his best, 'to medigate my lady's anger against her dau^r^.' 'She hath divers times said,' tho not to me,' wrote Mrs. Sherard, 'that if I should carry her to the Church she woold tell them ther, that shee would not mary them if they had either father or mother . . . you may imagine me to be in some trobull, but I hope to have comfort in the rest of my sweet children. Godallmightey give his gras & that alters nateur.' 'Sir I am to lead my Nov. 11, 1656

Nov. 3, 1656

life with them,' Peg writes, '& know so well my own temper that I feare i shall never be happy with them. Sir if you ples to perswaid my mother from this or any other that hath a father or mother you will oblige me . . . M^r Cotton hathe nether, & had som pretention to mee & Sir you know him to be a sivell person.' Mr. Cotton, having been so often extinguished by Mrs. Sherard, was persuaded by an aunt to transfer his attentions to another heiress, daughter of Sir Thomas Salusbury of Llewenny, and just when the cruel Peg was relenting towards him, Mrs. Sherard hears with very unreasonable displeasure that 'M^r Cotton is marryed. I woold faine know whithr it be to his 7,000 pound lady.'

The Doctor was overwhelmed with proposals: Nov. 5, 1657 'Sir Tho^s Ingram treats for M^r Slingsby, Sir Tho: Hatton for his sonne, & one Barronett Williams is on foot alsoe, but which hare to hunt I know not.' Luce Sheppard reports that: 'Sir Thomas liveth within 4 miles to M^r Cuts, in 5 miles of Cambridg; the mother yet liveing, not above 2 or 3 and forty: there is 6 or 7 children in all. The young gent: not very tall, but well shaped for his height.' Peg gave her mother '10 words for one,' nobody but Sir Ralph could manage her—'As I take it, its very convenient for the Worshipful Dominie Politick to be here,' writes the Doctor, 'when Peg Eure comes upp to be woed, therefore prepare for it.' 'She is an uncertaine creature to deale withall; noe faith in villanous woman. She came upp with as much joy & resolution to have M^r Strickland as could be, and now she flaggs wonderfully.' Lord St. John's son was also in question, but he was 'contracted' soon after 'to one of 13 years old.'

Mrs. Sherard wrote (about Dec. 6) thanking Sir Ralph for a good report of her daughters. 'I shall licke them the betr my selfe, for I know you aier betor abull to Juge of them then I am. I have tacked som painies with them to put as good prinsiobles in them as I am capabull to dow, and I hope God will give his blessing with it. I hir by the by that Moll hath a great mind to see a play; if they be as they have bin this many eyers [years] tuged to peisuses at them, I shall not licke them, soe I have refred hir to you. If you think as she may goe with safty, I am well content, soe shee goes with thos persones as tis fit for hir, I believe peg had rather goe A visit.' Mrs. Sherard's anxiety lest her daughter should be tugged to pieces by the crowds at the theatre suggests that such amusements were coming into fashion again.

In the midst of all this pleasant intercourse a crisis came in Mun's easy-going life probably as surprising to himself as to those about him; he fell seriously and desperately in love. The change wrought in his character was immediate, it was no longer a question of a shadowy female figure whom Uncle Doctor or Sir Ralph might recommend, he took his life into his own hands; there was only one face and one voice now in the world for him—the face and the voice of Mary Eure. The two older men who were managing the 'matching' so comfortably, with no gusts of passion to complicate the making of treaties, must have been startled; but Sir Ralph, who had himself known what true love was, may not have been displeased to see his son shake off his apathy. At any rate they accepted the position; Sir Ralph was left to make peace as best he could with Lady Warwick and Sir Edward Dec. 7, 1657 Wortley,[1] and Dr. Denton gallantly opened the fresh campaign by a letter to his sister Mrs. Sherard, which probably crossed the one she last wrote to Sir Ralph, in happy unconsciousness of this fresh complication. 'Mun Verney hath lately declined a very good match propounded for him by his father; whereat wee both wondred not a little. After much enquiry, we found his reason was because he had absolutely fixed and settled already his affection upon your Mall, which he thought most proper to be communicated unto you in the first place. Wee represented unto him your aversenesse of bestowing your daughter in your familye, he says he hath considered that, and hath satisfied himselfe in that point, [and] that he beleeves he can satisfy you. . . I offer this to your consideration and wayte your answer.'

This opening of the negotiations was evidently undertaken with much deliberation. The rough copy of this letter is partly in Sir Ralph's hand, and partly in Dr. Denton's, and there has been a discussion whether the young lady should be referred to as 'your daughter Mary,' or as she was usually called 'Mall' by the two elderly men who had acted so kind a part towards the girl since her father's death; the more familiar title eventually carried the day. Mrs. Sherard replied in general terms that her daughter was averse to the married state, and implied that when her two little girls were under Sir Ralph's care at Blois, he had somewhat abused her confidence by planning this match. Sir Ralph replies: 'Now in answer to yours of the 14th which concerned my Sonne, and your deare daughter, I cannot blame you for not allowing him to make addresses there, for I know shee deserves the best of men and Fortunes. But as to my owne sonn, I seariously protest before Almighty God, that neither directly nor indirectly, by myselfe, or any other have I at any time perswaded her to accept of his service. Tis true I finde him much more taken with her, then ever I thought he could have been with any woeman; and I cannot blame him, for were I of his years, I myselfe should bee his Rivall. But deare Aunt, assure yourselfe that neither my passion for her, nor my affection for him shall ever make me use you unhansomly or forfeit that confidence you have ever had in me.' Some coyness on the maiden's part was only to be expected, but when the marriage was so desirable on both sides in point of character, income, Dec. 21, 1657 and position, Sir Ralph seems to have had no doubt that so ardent a suitor as his son would eventually win the lady. But, alas, Mary had changed as well as Edmund, and the cousin, who had been so welcome a friend and playmate, became positively repulsive to her as a lover—a revulsion of feeling which he could not be expected to understand or credit.

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[1] Alianora Tryon married Sir Richard Franklyn, Bart., of Moor Park, Hants, and eventually became a considerable heiress, when her brother Sir Samuel died unmarried in 1671.

That Christmas Day, 1657, Edmund came of age, but in the unsettled state of the times, and of his own prospects, no family festivities seem to have marked his birthday. The opening of the New Year, 1658, which was to bring him so much suspense and sorrow, found him in London very ill with measles, and a complication of cold, cough, and ague. He writes anxious letters to Dr. Denton about the matter nearest his heart. Aunt Sherard's scruples seem to him very far fetched,—'she said she could not be satisfied in point of kindred, then the world being wyde, she would not venture her conscience upon a disputable point, besides that she had noe mind to part with her daughter as long as she lived.' He longs for the Doctor's help and counsel. Sir Ralph uses an argument which sounds strangely in our ears, the drift of his long letter being that if Mun would not or could not find a wife, he might be driven to marry again. Mun replies in low spirits ; Aunt Sherard has been in town, but is sending her girls home ; he is only too anxious to be married—to Mary ; Eleanor Tryan's humours and deportment had been very disagreeable to him on a nearer acquaintance (which by-the-bye was entirely an afterthought) ; his father sees now that he *is* capable of a real and deep attachment, whereupon he relapses into a recital of Mary's charms ; Sir Ralph need never think of marriage if it depends upon his son's devotion ; he hints that it would be disastrous to Claydon to have to furnish fortunes for a second family, and he concludes with a reference at once politic and affectionate to 'ma chere mère defunte,' whose large fortune he is sure his father would not wish to leave away from her own children.

The girls were now perversely determined to make fun of Edmund, but were quite devoted to Sir Ralph, and Mary Eure the night before leaving town appealed to him to come to their aid ; Margaret had been once again sought in marriage, by a 'son of Sir Thomas Danby, a Knight and Baronet of the North,' a match which her mother thought so desirable, that she was not inclined to tolerate in Margaret the objections she allowed Mary to urge against a lover equally unacceptable. 'Sir,' wrote Mary to Sir Ralph, 'I must begg of you to be att Whitsondine as soone as possible your occasions will give you leave, for my Mother is much displeased att my sister for refusing this Mr. Danby, and if you doe not come to make her peace with her mother shee will be utterly undon. Sir, I hope you will pardon my strange rude letres, for my part I shall pray to God with all my hart that I may see you very sudenly at Whitsondine, for I am sure I shall doe noing butt crie as long as my Mother is so angry with my sister and I cannot hope for any peace till you come.' Mary no longer concludes with 'my sarvice to my cousan Edmund.' A few days later she rejoices that Sir Ralph had not undertaken a 'durty Journey' at her desire, 'for God be blessed my sister has so well considered with her self, that shee has given all possible satisfaction to my Mother's desire who never said one word of it to her since shee came from London, and truly I found my mother's cariedge to my sister much otherwayes then I could have expected . . . so that I could not be satisfied without imparting to you my extream Joy who beg your silence for this and my former lettre.' Mrs. Sherard believes that Peg 'sores highe;' she objects not to the 'feutir fortune,' but to the present maintenance that Mr. Danby can settle upon her: 'shee hath now bin 12 wickes in towne and hath good acquaintance and bin in much company, and I have not hurd of any mach that hath bin ofered that is soe good as this is . . . and in all this four yeares and a halfe that shee hath bin in ingland excepting that of Sir Harry Le, I know of no ofers as hath bin worth the accepting.' Mrs. Sherard might have been letting a furnished house, and Mun may be forgiven for doubting whether her objections to parting with a daughter were insuperable.

Mrs. Sherard writes again from Whitsondine in high good humour when Peg has given 'her free consent for me to treat,' and to do her justice she believes that Mr. Danby has much to recommend him besides his estate, which is 'very considerable.' 'Such a man as he is, is not esily to be found, for he hath a good deale of wit, and of a good understanding and a discreet person. . . . Had I sought all ingland I thinke I could not have found one as woold have shewted with my Dafteres Disposition soe well as this will dow, for he is free from all vice as far as I can lerne; his governor in his family was one D^{r} Binacombe, he had bin one of the Kinges Chaplines. . . . I have bin told by thos as had it out of his owne mouth, that he is a great admirer of him,' &c. &c. Sir Ralph is glad to hear that 'Peg has returned to her obedience,' and hopes she will entrust to her mother all the pecuniary part of the business. Mrs. Sherard retorts sharply that there is no reason to praise Peg's obedience, for her mother has had none of it in this affair, 'and as for her trusting of me to loocke into her estat, I doe not take myselfe to be obliged to her at all, for shewer non can thinke me soe childish as to leave any thing to her, more than the licking of the person, for all other thinges I shall dow as I see case, not acquainting her what I intend to dow, for it is to put my owne power out of my handes. . . . If shee cannot live of 2,000 I beleeve ten thousand will not satisfie her; all I find as shee desires it for, is but to spend it uppon her vanities, which will macke her account the hevier at the day of judgment. In my esteeme an honist ghentilman with 2,000 a yeare is richies enoufe; if he hath that I shall be well satisfied, and soe will all resonabull peopel.' She does not pretend that Mr. Danby is an attractive person, she has seen a many man 'more modish and more taking than himselfe,' but she feels sure he will bear with Peg's humours, having 'discretion enoufe and good nateur.'

Sir Ralph treated the wayward girl with a courtesy which her mother never condescended to employ. 'Deare cozen,' he wrote when Mrs. Sherard and Peg had fallen out more violently than usual, 'I confesse I can not commend your resolution. . . . I will not argue it with you now, when I see you next wee will chat about it. But what ever you doe in that, I know you are too discreet & too good to diminish any of that respect & duty thats due unto your Mother. Let all your words and actions be milde & humble & with submission unto her, for that's the way to regaine her favour, and therby your owne happiness. Beleeve me, cozen, there is not a better-natured Woeman liveing, nor can a Mother bee more tender or affectionate to a childe then shee hath been to you, nor more carefull of a Fortune then shee hath been of yours ; and though perhapps, shee often chides & tells you plainly of your little faults, & with such an eagernesse as possibly you may conceive too much for such small matters, yet your back hath been no sooner turned but I have observed her taking twenty occations to commend you and thanke God for you, as one of her greatest blessings.' Peg Fust sided with her aunt, and thought Peg Eure too dainty. Mr. Danby, she says, 'is very free from that fashionable vise of being a good felow. . . . Richer are to be had, if she can get them, but a siveler sober man, I thinck is hardly to be found.'

Nancy Denton too claimed her godfather's help to coax her mother, as she wanted an allowance; her father was willing she should have 30*l.*; 'Sir,' she wrote, 'I shall desiar you to speak on it by cance, & if my mothar shuld ask you whathar I spoke unto you, pray say I naver spoke unto you. . . . S^{r} I pray doe not speak of it befor me.' Well might she say in her next letter: 'I cannat cues but blus when I thinck of the rudnes & trubell I put upon you.'

Mrs. Sherard has enough on her hands; her two would-be sons-in-law are constantly writing to her, and waiting upon her, and she has a family of little Sherards to attend to; she can do nothing without Sir Ralph's help, so in the intervals of snubbing his son she consults him about her own. Edmund, who in height and good looks had much the advantage of Mr. Danby, and whose worldly position was quite as eligible, hopes that Moll, like Peg, may be brought round to a better mind, and his great desire is now to secure the same powerful and peremptory intercession on his own behalf, that had done so much for her sister's fortunate, excellent, and unattractive suitor. He thinks it well to offer Mrs. Sherard's conscience the consolation of a ghostly father, in the person of the Rector of Claydon. Kind Mr. Butterfield mounted his cob, and jogged off into Rutlandshire to allay her scruples about the marriage of first cousins once removed. He carried in his pocket a love-letter for Mary, and a handsome offer of settlements to be given to Mrs. Sherard from Sir Ralph, when her religious doubts had been removed.

March 15, 1658

Edmund writes to Dr. Denton from Claydon: 'This very day our Parson Butterfield went to my Aunt Sherard's at Whitsondine, . . . having had a good interest in my Aunt formerly, he hopes to find the same still; however he sayd that he would put her hard to it, the success you shall hear by the next. . . . If ever I be so happy as to marry her daughter I dare insure all the world that neither she nor her daughter shall ever have just cause to repent in anything whatsoever.' Of 'success' in this embassy there was nothing at all to record: 'My Mistris, her sister and Peg Fust,' he writes, 'make themselves very merry with my sending Parson Butterfield to Whitsondine, and they wonder that my father did not advise me better than to send such a person a wooing,—they sayd that in truth he was improper for that purpose, neither did I send him for that to my Mistris, but to the mother only that he might satisfye her pretended scruple of conscience. I must confesse, though the man be very wise, he has an extraordinary sneaking countenance and way with him, which most of his profession have (me thinkes) who are of the pretended reformed religion.' Is Edmund contrasting the ministers of the Commonwealth with the courtly priests and Jesuits he had known abroad? or is his sweeping condemnation of the English clergy amply explained by his being crossed in love? In any case he is ungratefully angry with poor Mr. Butterfield. Mrs. Sherard, however, had returned a civil answer to the letters he brought; she expresses the warmest regard for her young 'cousin Mun;' Mr. Butterfield has convinced her that the marriage is not unlawful —and she adds affectionately to Sir Ralph: 'You cannot imagine the trouble I am in, that I cannot answer your sonne's inclinations as to Deare Mall, for she hath other thoughts than to marry. . . . I doubt not but in the way of reason to satisfye your son that he will think of some other, for that I hope he will do, for she assureth me she will never marry, and I have ingaged myselfe to her I will neither force her nor persuade her. I must ever owne her obligations to him for his affections, and yours to be no lesse. . . . As for her answer to her cosen, I have left it to her, and what she rightes is her owne not miene.'

Edmund, ignoring all the rest, thanks Mrs. Sherard for her kind expressions towards himself, and Sir Ralph believes 'that can hardly be firmly resolved against, which God and Nature dictate; truly upon the best considerations I have, my hope is that with God's blessing and with our concurrence it will prove an happy match on all hands, otherwise it should not be so solemnly promoted by me.'

Mr. Butterfield, conscious of gifts, and entirely unconscious of any unfavourable impression he had left behind him, makes another appeal to Mrs. Sherard, which gives us a kindlier picture of Mun than he has left us of the Rector : 'Madam, I humbly thanke you for my courteous useage at your house : in obedience to your will I have cast all the colde water of your's and your daughter's reasons and denyals upon the flames of that passionate young gentleman in whose noble heart the fire had taken such fast hold before, and is growne to such a strength that it converts all things into fuell, and will I feare in time destroy the whole Fabricke, if you can do no more to quench it, then for ought I see others can. Tis Infinit pity such generous love in a person so wise, so sober, provident and hopefull, the onely expectation of a family so well deserving, should be ruin'd by so sad a fate. . . . And truly tis unkindly done of that young and so virtuous Lady to be so good, so amiable, and to appeare so to this wretched world as a destructive Meteor onely to the miserable beholders. If you will not help, yet pity him at least ; I know you have sometimes felt your selfe the power, the Tyranny of love, and let him go at least and take the doome of his rash and wrong affection, from those lips that gave his this fatall wound ; who can tell but that may be his cure. [We hope Mrs. Aris *veuve* was treated to some of these lovely phrases for home consumption.] In my conscience,' continues the good rector, 'he would be as good, as kinde, as provident, as happy a husband for her as the World affords. I desire not to trouble you with a reply to these my sawcy lines. Onely your pardon for my freenes; I cannot pleade the cause of a friend and Lover with that coolenes and discretion that a many can. You will finde the story no Romance.'

Her religious scruples removed, Mrs. Sherard starts a fresh objection: Moll has been told by a French physician that if she marries she will certainly die, and Edmund appeals to Dr. Denton to disabuse her of what he considers a preposterous notion; and to assure her that 'matrimony is a soveraigne if not the only compleate medicine for all feminine infirmities. . . . My mistris insisting upon a resolution of not marrying at all, is but what modesty prompts all virgins to say, and nature teaches to breake in my judgement . . . besides me thinkes there is a loopehole in her letter to me, through which I fancye that I see some glimmering of hope, which is this, she will never change that resolution unlesse her mother command her—now Sir I do most earnestly begg of you to stand my good friend during this criticall time of suspense in this grand affaire of my life—to persuade the mother that she instruct the daughter of her dutye;' he feels that Mary might safely trust herself with him, 'being that I love her so intirely.'

But Edmund could not leave his interests with any advocate, and he writes to Mary from Claydon with a depth of feeling which all the affectation of the style cannot conceal. 'Madam, you are soe perfect empresse of my heart that in obedience to yours by M^r Butterfield, I have used more violence uppon my selfe these 3 weekes then a Russe, whoe takes it for an honnour to destroy himselfe at his Prince's comand: for my affection is so pure that it carryes with it as absolute a resignation of my selfe to you though with my owne destruction, and in conformitye to your order, I beleived that you were then best enjoyed by mee when I wrought your greatest content. Beleive me (Madam) this zeale hath forced me out of my selfe, as farre as any saint ever was, in a rapture; yet after all my art and diligence to put this candle under a bushell, it burnt the more furiouslye, because I tryed so much to extinguish it; for I protest before the majesty of God, I find by strong experience, that I can noe more obteyne of my will to abate of her love, then I can of my memorye that there is noe such person as you are, or my understanding that you are not adorned with all those perfections, the idea whereof doth soe possesse and ravish my soul. I vow by your supremacye and my allegeance that I can ascribe the grouth of my love to this vast height to no other cause but your huge merit, and my greate care not to sin against it through unadvisednesse or indiscretion; this made me study how to compose my father's displeasure, and answere your Lady mother's scruples, and your desire of single life, before I totally submitted to the sweete conquest your

April 12, 1658

goodnesse hath over mee; to which I am now so compleate a captive that all the neglect you can fasten on your slave, or the diversion friends can prompt me to, are able to beget noe other thought in me then of living and dying your *devotee*, wherefore I beseech you to consider how it can become your Nature, soe full of grace and goodnesse, to call me not Naomi, but Marah, for the Lord hath dealt bitterly with me, and the waters of Marah are bitter to your supplicant, by giving bitternesse of Spirit to that heart which begs your compassion and comfort; your owne knowledge of the integritye thereof cannot but tell you, this deserves not the corrosive of a deniall, & my fayth and knowledge of your candor & sweetnesse assure me that no word so harsh can fall from your tongue or pen. I beseech you to give me leave to adde one graine of reason to all this weight of affection which is that your resolution is contrary to that end whereto God and nature ordeyned you: not regardful to your dearest relations dead and living, but above all injurious to your sellfe; . . . if you put my affection in one scale and your resolution in the other, & if only judgement held the ballance, (which I reasonably hope kindnesse may some what bias) I shall not bee condemned for prising this so greate and well grounded truth that it is impossible for me to live or die other then, Madam, Sweetest Lady, Your most passionately devoted vassal,

EDMUND VERNEY.'

A note is added to his own copy of the letter, 'The superscription was—For M^{rs} Mary Eure—and no more,' as if language failed to supply any adequate address! Mary had refused to receive his letters, but Mun sent this one to Dr. Denton to forward. 'Not to convey it,' he writes, 'might have argued coldness in me towards your concerne, & to convey is contrary to my sister's instructions, however its gone for this time, but I must begg your excuse for the like, what I doe I shall doe openly.' Mun had found an unexpected ally. 'You have a sollicitrix here that was yours body and bones, which I presume you did as little dreame of as my selfe—which is my wife. It seemes my sister had chatted it out to her & shee prest it on in her way which is earnest enough, but for ought I could understand gave her small encouragement.'

April 22, 1658

A week later Edmund hears that Mrs. Sherard is in town without the girls; his interview with her settles nothing, and he writes to her after thinking it over: 'I am amazed that a lady soe vertuous & discreete as you are should leave a gentleman & a lover both unsatisfyed in reason and discontented in his affection.' He has hinted to her that she is treating him very differently from Mr. Danby—she will not say that Mary has any dislike to him, but that she prefers a single life, 'that,' he says pathetically, 'is a point that none can justifye the insisting upon but her selfe; and if she please to improve that modest resolution to a perfect vow, I know none concerned therein but God her selfe and mee ; neither becomes it either my judgement or affection to receave the finall result of that from any mouth but her owne. . . . I comfort my selfe with the conscience that I have omitted nothing towards your Ladiship which becomes a gentleman ; my father is not only satisfied but highly pleased with my choyce, & I know noe more that I have to doe but to wayte on my Mistriss in person, and agayne begg your leave to doe, which if I cannot obteyne, it will much afflict your humble petitioner, but that may not hinder him from doing like a gentile and passionate lover ; for my mistresse must be myne or I not myselfe. The vastnesse of my affection for the daughter, will doubtlesse obtaine pardon from the mother, for all the indiscretion or rudeness which in this matter may be committed by me, who would make it the whole studdy of my life to please both your selfe and your daughter, (the first and only love my youth ever had or shall have,) if ever I bee so happy as to be honoured with the title of your most dutifull most obedient sonne and most devoted humble servant,

EDMUND VERNEY.'

He implores his father once more to help him. 'Je vous promets sur la parole d'un gentilhomme et d'un soldat, que si je puis obtenir cette damoiselle pour ma femme toutte ma vie je ne parlerois, fairois, penserois, respirerois rien sinon selon vostre plaisir.' A letter from Mary to her mother duly forwarded to Sir

Ralph, copied by him and docketed, 'I showed Mun the originall letter,' ought to have convinced the latter that there was a more serious obstacle to overcome than Aunt Sherard's irresolution. May 8, 1658 'Madame, I have received a wandering letter from my Cozen Edmond Verney, how it came to Melton I know not, but there Joseph found it; really I was never more surprised in my life, for I thought my last to him might have prevented his farther troubling himselfe, for since you have alwaies been pleased to leave me to myselfe I could wish he knew that if hee write or speake a Thousand times it will not prevaile with me at all. I am sorry hee forceth mee to say, if I would marry it should not bee him [alas for the loophole of comfort Mun had found before !], not that I have any thing against my cozen, but esteeme him as hee is my neare relation, but never whilst I breathe will I bee wrought to have the least thought of giving him any incourragement in his pretentions, hee would much obleige me to leave persisting in it. Madame, I shall not answere his letter without your command, which I hope I shall not receive because I should unwillingly obey it. All the acknowledgment in the world I render you for your long past promise of never perswading me to marry. Sweet Maddame, that is my resolution; when I change it, your Ladyshipp shall know, but I beleeve I shall nevar trouble you with that message. Bee pleased to Pardon this long impertinency and grant me your blessing, thus I remaine, Deare Madame, your obedient daughter, Mary Eure.'

This letter only gave the offender an excuse for writing to his mistress to implore her pardon: 'Madam,' writes Edmund from Covent Garden, 'my last made you my confessor; and this humbly beggs leave to tell you that a Penitent cannot estime himselfe forgiven till he find himselfe restored to grace, therefore I beseech you to use your power, injoyne mee pennance; whereby I may learne and expiate the depth of my guilt and your displeasure. I have ransackt every corner of my heart, and called every thought thereof concerning my mistress and her mother to a strict account and can find nothing but height of affection for the one and of respect and deutye for the other. Yet good natures are sollicitous when a misapprehension befalls them, as much as if they were really guiltye; this makes Mun Verney professe that he is more angry with himselfe that your Ladyship should imagine, etc., etc., etc.' He declares it would be a 'slender bragge' to say that he is incapable of displeasing her; he again prays for an interview, 'for I am among those objects which are seene and please best at a closer view. Madam, a devout lover is in a sadd case, for nothing more then that hee cannot plead his owne cause without playing the foole in commending himselfe, & I detest the one as much as I am gone of the other. Therefore I beseech your Ladyship that this may find grace in your sight, and returne with some message of countenance and comfort to your most devoted and deutifull servant Edmond Verney.'

May 24, 1658

Another elaborate letter followed to Mrs. Sherard; indeed, if fine-drawn phrases could avail, Edmund does not spare them: he is in constant correspondence with his own friend, Dr. Thomas Hyde, about the etiquette of courtship.

Dr. Thomas Hyde's share in Edmund's wooing is not the least curious part of the story. He was a first cousin of Sir Edmund's old friend Lord Clarendon; and brother of Sir Robert Hyde, the Judge, who came to Aylesbury on circuit after the Restoration, and kept up the family friendship with the Verneys. He was a Fellow of New College, and Judge of the Admiralty Court, and lived at Gray's Inn when he was not at Salisbury. They wrote to each other in terms of the most fanciful and extravagant affection; Edmund had an unbounded admiration for his friend's acquirements and his easy flow of words. Edmund sends skeleton letters for Dr. Hyde 'to adorn;' to despatch one of his own beside one of the Doctor's would be, he says, 'like ploughing with an ox and an ass!' Hyde seems to have been a selfish, worldly man; he encouraged Edmund in hard thoughts of his father, and sent him letters in an underhand way, under cover, to Parson Aris and others. Here is a note from the Doctor enclosing copies of letters for Mun to write to Peg Eure, Peg Fust, and Luce Sheppard: 'Good Sir, your last came this morning to my hands, & in complyance therewith I have made the enclosed. It is an hard task to make bricks without straw, but

I have raked together some rubbish. The directions are followed as neare as I might, & I was bound to venter at some proportionation of expressions by conjecture. For instructions of this nature can hardly be delivered but by word of Mouth. Not but what I rejoyce to find your Pen soe Terse, that I thinke it exceedes myne, but the Nature & Variety of the subject beares it not. All is submitted to your discretion for alteration, addition, or totall rejection! only that you use, write and poynt as you sawe it under my hand.'

Captain and Mrs. Sherard paid a visit to Claydon, but they only brought Peg Fust with them, the two Eure girls were prudently left behind at Whitsondine, to Mun's great disappointment. The letters so carefully prepared were to congratulate Peg Eure on her engagement. 'Mr. Danby hath demonstrated his discretion in placing his affection on soe worthy a Lady, & tis not flattery to say, my Cosen Peg's mouth was not out of taste when she admitted him for her servant.' He does not fail to insinuate a hope that her good example may influence her sister. Luce Sheppard, because of her intimacy with the girls, has suddenly become a most interesting person in his eyes, and the following note, written by Dr. Hyde and revised by Mun, was evidently felt to be a triumph of antithesis in epistolary art. 'M^{rs} Shepheard, my disposition commands me to pay thanks at home for civilities receaved Abroade. These you afforded mee in France, in soe high measure, that June 7, 1658 tract of time cannot extinguish the obligations thereof, but encreases it, and creates in me a longing desire of requitall. I hope this acknowledgement will not seeme to come late, for it ownes the courtesies done to Mun Verney, Boy, so soone as he could write, Man. My arrivall to this state hath put in my head many considerations, more than ever you knew in it; but in time you shall know more, not doubting but you will promote them to the utmost of your industrye and power, and in this confidence rests your faythfull friend and servant Ed: Verney.'

'My dearest Mistresse,' Edmund wrote to Mary, 'Startle not I beseech you at the title, for it is yours and none but yours, & my pen may be pardoned for writing what is so deeply engraven in my heart; cast I beseech you an eye of pittye upon your slave, whom your perfections have made the most miserable creature in the world, your vertues have such absolute dominion over my soule that it can think of nothing but M^{rs} Mary Eure. I think that I am writing this at Claydon, but I can scearse beleeve it, for there is more of me at Whitsondine then in Buckinghamshire: & you will be persuaded it is so, when I assure you that as often as I make any addresses to my God, my saint, even your sweete selfe interposes betweene my maker and mee. Madam bestow no answere at all on me, but of acceptance & kindnesse; indeed I am capable of noe other, for a deniall from you, & a dagger at my heart are the same thing.'

Mrs. Sherard writes to Sir Ralph: 'Sweet nephew, my Mall hath bin with me with a letor as came from your Son, and shee hath desired me to right to you y^t you will tacke off your son from givinge himselfe or her any ferther trobul in his pretension to her, for it is her full resolution never to alter her conditions. I will right what I dow really thinke. I beleeve her, and shee takes it very ill of thos as doeth not. Your Son may fansy to him selfe great maters y^t he should gain her if he had but an oppertunity but I beleeve he woold find him selfe deseived . . . shee knows not whie shee should admit of any firther addressis by reson shee hath given him soe full an answer alredy : but if it bee his desier to macke it a publicke bisinis shee saith shee will declare to all y^e world as shee never will have him. . . . I must confes I have often woondered at his pations for Mall, for I have divers times heard him say (since he saw my Dafter) as all woomen waier alicke to him. . . . I beleeve very well of my dafter, But there is many vertewous woomen in y^e world besides her, . . . soe with my well wishies to you both I rest, but never from being your most affectionat Ante Marg : Sherard. I have bid Mall right to you herselfe if shee woold, for shee can right her minde betir to you herselfe then I can.' June 17, 1658

Mary herself has not the smallest taste for flirtation, and she writes back, not to Edmund, but to his father. 'Sir, . . . tis my petition you will pleas to use your endeavor to devert my cosen your son June 21, 1658 from persisting farther. . . . Pray tell him itt is hard to force an afection; he will not find mee so pliable as I beleive he expects and I would unwillingly have him venture upon so fruittles a trouble, for I take noe pleasure in severyty, neither am I so tame as to be compelled from my resolution; this is truth, and I am the more induced you will believe itt because your self dealles so truly witth all the world.' Sir Ralph replies: 'Deare Cozen, I will not say you are a hard Mistris, well knowing your owne Hart must needes prevent mee, nor shall I presse you to make my sonne happy, since you soe positively declare against it; for tis impossible to force affection, and where that's wanting there can never be a true contentment. What I have sayd, & what I have doun (since the receipt of your letter) in order to your commands, tis needless to expresse, but what successe I have had, this inclosed (if you please to read it) will soone informe you. And I confesse I doe not much woonder at it, for who ever considders your vertues can doe no lesse then love and honour you; and can you thinke that an affection built and settled uppon such a basis is either easily or suddenly destroyed? Noe, noe, sweet cozen, few or none have that absolute mastery over theire owne passions as to love or unlove, either whome, or when they list; nor can that love be real that is at such command. Therefore I presume you will not exact a greater obedience then he, or any man living (that loves you truly) can performe, but rather (since you doe not listen to him) leave it to time, and his owne sad thoughts, to loosen that which your owne merrits have rivetted soe fast within him.'

Well might Mun say that his father had 'writ a very handsome letter' for him, and Mary must have felt her kind old friend to be quite a broken reed, when she found the enclosure he sent her was another passionate appeal from her irrepressible admirer. 'Madam, I must begg leave to bemoane the prodigious method of my fate, that my mistrisse doome should be conveyed to her servant by the hands of his owne father, since the greatest malefactor in the world receaves his sentence in person, but the causes thereof assigned have put even my soule upon the racke; your resolution not to marry was fatall enoughe, but the addition (of never him), and the causes why, have commanded mee to recollect all my thoughts and words, to survey all my letters and actions in relation to your deare selfe with a most rigid and censorious eye; and let me never see the face of God or yours, if I can deserve the least atome that lookes towards importunitye or much less force. . . . Dearest Mistriss give mee leave to wish from the botom of my heart, that there never be other force offerd to you then what may proceed from mee: for the full enjoyment of your content is the greatest happiness and dayly prayer of, Madam, your most passionate vassall and devoted slave Edmond Verney.'

Watchful of every chance of communicating with

Mary, Edmund (who has heroically refrained from writing to her for full three months,) appeals to Colonel Henry Verney, who is staying at Whitsondine, to help him, but Henry replies that he has tried 'all his little witts,' but that he would undertake as soone to empty the sea, as to persuade Mary to marriage. He offers this miserable consolation: 'I shall make it my studdy night and day in my little Progresse to finde out a lady suiteable to thy likeing and merrit; much more I had to tell you of little stories, but my pen is so bad and noe better to bee got, etc., etc.,' and that is all the comfort Mun gets from his bachelor uncle.

Sept. 1658

Sir Ralph cannot give up hope; he writes of Mary as a jewel, there is no girl in England from whom he should expect so much happiness for his son, himself, and his family. In December Mun is again tormented by a ray of hope; he and his father are going to London, and Aunt Sherard 'has writt him word lately that she intended to be there about the same time with him, and that she would only bring my mistriss along with her and leave the residue of her family behind; methinks I see somewhat auspicious comming upon me,' writes the poor fellow; 'my father lookes upon me also with a gratious eye,' and he resolves that Mary shall not leave town without seeing him.

By this time Sir Nathaniel and Lady Hobart and many other relations have been drawn into this tragicomedy of 'Love's Labour Lost.' 'For your resolution,' Sir Nathaniel writes, 'to goe in person to receive your sentence, pardon me, I can by noe meanes approve of it. Except it bee to make the Captaine drunk and then perhaps he will beate your Aunt, which will bee some satisfaction; but to be serious. When I consider how the sweet innocent Virgin will be exposed, you cannot imagine how it afflicts mee, if you forgive her obedience (as you say you doo) why will you trouble it; can you find in your heart to be a witness of the confusion and disorder which your presence will occasion? . . . Noe, deare cosin, as you love honor, let mee conjure you not to doe a thing soe unhandsom, soe unmanly.' So that scheme fell to the ground, and Mary returned unmolested to Whitsondine.

In January 1659 Sir Ralph and Edmund are together in town; the latter, sick with hope deferred, still insists that Mary ought to grant him a personal interview before giving him his final answer. Sir Ralph writes to Mrs. Sherard that, on 'Wednesday last' Mun came to consult him about sending his man to Whitsondine with a letter. Sir Ralph thought that 'hee was sufficiently diswaded from it, but on Friday night when I was going to Bed, hee came to me againe & told me his intention was to send away his Man the very next Morning, uppon which (when I saw him soe resolved) though I cast some new Rubbs in his Way, I did noe more oppose it.' The messenger went, but this time he took 'neither Scripp nor Scrole nor Message' from Sir Ralph.

Jan. 17, 1659

Nothing could be colder than Mary's reply to Edmund. 'Sir, I much wondre my wrighting should not as well satisfie you as my speaking (unless you thinke me so foolish that I cannot sett downe my owne sence). My admitting you to Whitsondine would perhaps be taken for some smale incourigment which I am resolved shall never be given you by your servant, Mary Eure.' Mrs. Sherard is 'shewer' that Mall will not change her mind, and hopes that Mun will no longer 'prosicewt' his suit.

This might be taken as conclusive. In February another match is proposed to him with a daughter of Lady Springet, who lives 'within 5 miles of Chaford in the Chilton of Buckinghamshire.' Edmund, weary of suspense, and held, as he says, in the 'Padlock of Necessity,' makes some languid inquiries about the young lady, whether she be 'of a gentle and grave behaviour;' but he still thinks that he ought not to take any final step without having seen Mary face to face. He tries to persuade his father to lend him horses to go into Rutlandshire; this he utterly refuses, though Mr. Butterfield is won over by Mun's arguments, and they both give Sir Ralph 'reason enough whereby I was bound to go, but that never mooves him when he has no mind to it.' Mun finds that if he goes at all, 'it must be as a rebellious sonne & a runaway,' which would not recommend him at the journey's end, and besides 'horses good & able enough to carry him with credit are hard to bee found among hackenees.' In March, strange to say, the

February, 1659

mother does not wish the matter to be considered as at an end: 'I shall contrive some waie this somer for your son to see my M. E.'

Henry recommends Lady Longueville's daughter, and Sir Ralph is inquiring in July about a rich Mrs. Utbut in the City; but Mrs. Utbut's demands are too big, and she does not wish her daughter of fourteen to marry for three years. Mun feels no regret that it comes to nothing; 'a vertuous gentlewoman is by farre to bee esteemed and preferred than the richest cittizen in England.'

Mrs. Sherard and Danby *père* have quarrelled over settlements, even the young man's 'carrig' has not been all she could desire, and Edmund reports that she has been to London 'to put a period to Mr. Danby's businesse,' but the perverse Peg feels more warmly towards him as her mother cools. Mrs. Sherard then asks Sir Ralph and Edmund to go with her into Yorkshire, and when they decline, as they have guests at Claydon, she proposes to send her daughters there, to give Edmund full opportunity 'to try what he can work upon Mall's spirit,' though, her mother adds, she still thinks she would not change her condition to be a 'Queene'! Sir Ralph is full of hospitable plans; he trusts that Peg Fust will come too, and he will send his coach to meet 'the three virgins' at any place appointed: 'my Sister Gardner brings Preshaw heather, and Sister Elmes, Sister Pen Denton, and Brother Harry meet her here—doubt not want of lodging, for the virgins

July 29, 1659

Aug. 9, 1659

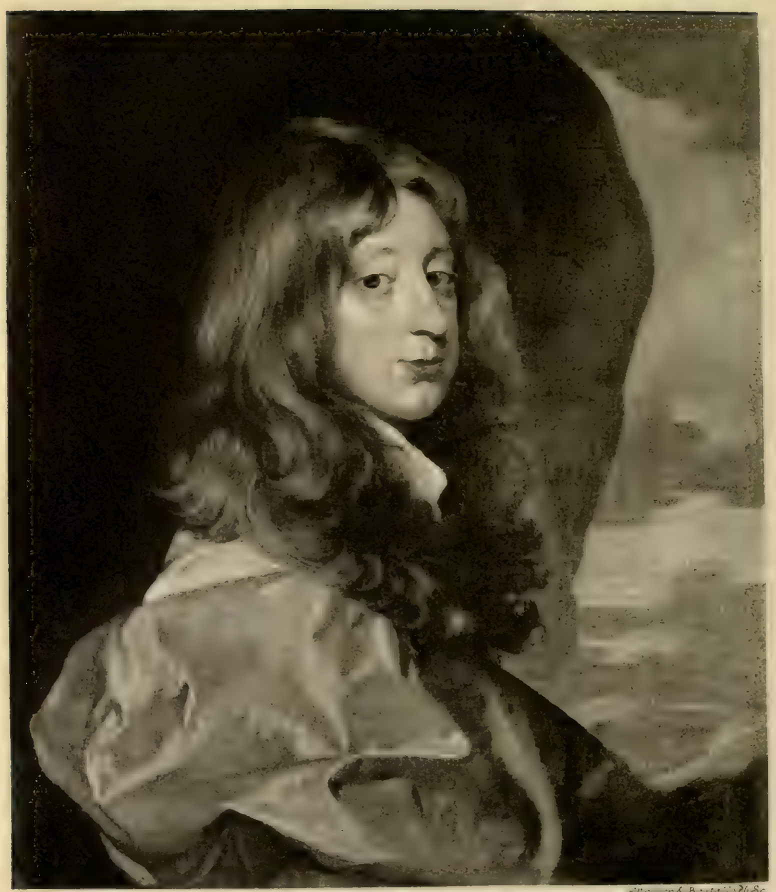
are resolved to ligge altogeather.' Edmund is amazed that Mrs. Sherard 'having long since extinguished and buried the least sparke of desire that way, should of herselfe in a manner rekindle and rake it up againe.' 'I am sory that my first meeting with my mistrisse must be at my owne house where I cannot without breaking the rules of good manners give her back her rude letter with reproache.' He is embittered, but only for a moment, for his heart is full of joy when he thinks she is really coming, 'and I heare a bird sing I shall have her at length.'

But the visit is never paid; Mall manages to fall sick, and is frequently blooded. Mrs. Sherard writes in October that 'the seson of the year is past for jurneys of plesheur,' though she had three times prepared her daughters for a start, and in November she announces Peg's marriage to Sir Ralph in these terms: 'One of them is disposed of now, I bles God for it—as you have ever bin hur very great frind soe pray will you continew it and advis her to complye with her husband and not to shufill him off, after shee hath had him a time, as she hath don some others besides my selfe.' In December she is a little pacified, she thinks that Peg is doing very well with Mr. Danby, and that he is 'a juditious & a discreet man, and but that he hath a tircke [Turk] to his father,' he might have a large income now; her news is a little mixed, for 'the anibaptis are flocking northwards,' and the hard frost prevents her sending him 'som goosebirye trees.'

Mun writes to Mrs. Sherard once more to ask her intentions : 'without ostentation be it spoken, Thom: Danby will not thinke himself disparaged if Mun Verney professe himselfe as capable of the yonger sister as he is of the elder.' Her reply is to invite Edmund and his father to keep Christmas with them at Whitsondine, 'tho' I do not interpret this invitation as any good omen,' writes poor Mun.

In February 1660 he tells his father 'that there remaines in me a hankering after my old Mistriss, but truly I perceive not the least simptome whereby reason dares without vaine & foolish presumption elevate my hopes. I assure myselfe that there is noe other proposall enterteyned, but if there bee I must beare it patiently considering that I can in no way hinder it.' In April 1660 Captain Sherard has been chosen Knight of the Shire for Rutland, and his wife and Mary are going to town, where Edmund expects to meet them. In August he asks Dr. Hyde to pen another letter for him, for 'tis not possible for any one to be more acute & sublime,' making one more passionate and persuasive appeal to his mistress, pointing out his long and faithful courtship, his humble behaviour, and absolute submission to her will in not importuning her, though his eternal happiness depends on her answer, 'all this set forth in your noble strayne may perhaps work some effect if anything cann.' But another year goes by and at the end of 1660 Dr. Hyde can only condole with his friend that Mrs. Sherard is still making 'such varietyes of exceptions and scruples when this Resolution owned would have been taken for a peremptory answer,' and that after '3 yeares tricks & attendance' the Lady has not been 'with soe much adoe obteyned.'

In an old family pocket book, recently found amongst some lumber in the smoking room at Claydon, the first entry is as follows, in John Verney's hand: '*Marriage* 1663, July 15. Mary Eure and William Palmes in St. Martin's by Dr. Robert Townsend.' Some fifty years later there is a begging letter from Mr. Palmes, Mary's son; and a copy across the back of it, of a prompt and curt refusal from the 'Cousin Verney,' at that time owner of Claydon: his sentimental references to his mother and the affection of old times awake no response in the home of which Mary had so persistently refused to become the mistress.



Walker & Boutall Ph.Sc.

John Verney

from a painting by Soest at Claydon House.

CHAPTER X.

JOHN VERNEY, THE INDUSTRIOUS APPRENTICE.

1653 to 1662.

> Go, silly worm, drudge, trudge, and travel,
> Despising pain, so thou may'st gain
> Some honour, or some golden gravel.
>
> SYLVESTER.

THE career of Sir Ralph's second son, John Verney, as portrayed in the old letters, gives us as complete a picture of the progress of the industrious apprentice of the seventeenth century as Hogarth's famous series does of the eighteenth century, and with results even more splendid than the wedding with the merchant's daughter, and the Lord Mayor's coach, of Hogarth's highly moral climax. Our apprentice becomes a baronet, a landed proprietor, and a member of Parliament; and at last in the final scene his linen cap has been transformed into a viscount's coronet (with an earldom in prospect for his heirs), and we leave him with all that 'should accompany old age—as honour, love, obedience, troops of friends.'

Virtue herself stands aghast at the material rewards she has heaped up, and we feel more affection for the elder brother, with his blighted hopes and wasted opportunities, than the younger inspires, with all his success and prosperity. But the boy must have had no common strength of purpose who, in the evil days of the Stuart Restoration, could set his face so resolutely to a life of humdrum industry. Other youths of good family, his cousins and contemporaries, were idling away their lives, pretending to work at the Bar or struggling for a place at Court, while some, like 'Cousin Hals' and 'Cousin Turville,' even 'took to the road' and ended with the gallows. Nat Hobart, John Stewkley, and many of Sir Ralph's best friends had sons, who, not attaining to such a melodramatic end, yet brought nothing but debt and disappointment to their fathers' doors. If there was an absence of romance in the life of a man whose best years were devoted to the making of money, other fathers may well have envied Sir Ralph a son who at fifteen chose his own profession; who enjoyed his work as other men did not enjoy their pleasures; and whose aspirations were so reasonable, and plans so well-laid, that Fortune could not feel herself justified in frustrating them.

A pleasant, happy child, little Jack was welcome everywhere. In his baby days he had trotted after his mother, singing and chattering, and cheering her progress through the empty rooms at Claydon, when her husband was in exile. At ten years old Aunt Sherard writes of him: 'I have chosen Jack to be my galant, and I thinke I have as fine A one, as any in the towne.' Their precise and methodical father always leant upon John while he was inclined to depreciate Edmund. But his partiality bred no ill-will between the brothers, who were throughout life the best of friends.

At an age when little boys are apt to be equally trying to their garments and guardians—female—Luce Sheppard wrote, 'Mr. John hath keept his clothes in so good order, I have not had to buy anything for him: next weecke I will send him againe to scholle, allthough wee are great gainers by his sober company; yet wee must consider him that hee losse not by ours.' Mar. 30, 1654

Before his return from Blois, Sir Ralph had been pondering over this question of Jack's schooling. He was not in love with the new doctrines, and what we should now call a Church School was liable at any moment to have its light extinguished. By a stringent ordinance passed in 1654, ministers and schoolmasters 'who are or shall be Ignorant, Scandalous, Insufficient, or Negligent,' were to be ejected or restrained from teaching. It was hard indeed to find a schoolmaster with Royalist and Episcopal leanings, who could not be included in one or other of these categories; when not merely the preaching of disaffection against the government, but the profanation of the Sabbath, the use of the Book of Common Prayer, the encouragement of gambling, of May-poles, and of stage-plays, were all classed together as forbidden things. Under conditions so precarious, the Rev. Dr. James Fleetwood kept a school at Barn Elms in Surrey. His cousin, Charles Fleetwood, and his brother George were amongst Cromwell's strongest supporters, but he held firmly to the old opinions. It does not appear why Sir Ralph preferred a private to a public school, his own brothers had been at Winchester, the Stewkleys had a boy there, and the Doctor thought it 'a very fitt place for Jack;' perhaps he was afraid of the well-known Puritan principles of Warden Harris.[1]

Sept. 1653 Aunt Sherard writes from Whitsondine that if Sir Ralph does not mind 'a scoole soe far off of London, here is a very good one within 7 miles of me, at A plas called Uppingham;[2] the master hath the report of A very gentille man, and if you send him this waies, I will have a care of him, for I can nevr dow enoufe for you, for the care you have had of mine:' . . . 'the scoolmaster,' she writes again, 'is comended for a sivill and A well bred man, which I know will be very yousful to your young mounseer.'

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[1] There was an old connection with the school in both families; an Edmund Verney was a Winton scholar in 1508, and a Richard Stewkeley, of Hawkley, Hants, in 1505. John Potenger was headmaster in 1653, and was succeeded by William Burt from 1654 to 1657; but the headmasters were little more than ushers during the Commonwealth, the wardens were the great men. I am indebted to G. M. A. Hewett, Esq., of Winchester College, for this information.

[2] E. C. Selwyn, Esq., headmaster of Uppingham, kindly informs me that he can discover no old record of the school, or even of the headmasters before this century. He also says that Whissendine is quite ten miles off, another instance of the 'computed distances' in the old letters being shorter than the measured miles.

But Sir Ralph did object to the distance from town, and Jack was sent to Barn Elms.

The first leaving home is a sad ordeal, even with the luxuries and refinements of the modern preparatory school; and it must have been hard indeed to Jack. His ignorance of the traditions of English schoolboys, his little 'french aire' and foreign accent, so much admired by Luce Sheppard and his cousins, and the very cut of his clothes, no doubt exposed him to unsparing ridicule in the rough young world of those days; the lively child became for a time a grave and silent boy. The doctor writes, 'our schools doe Cow and over awe him;' and six months later Mrs. Isham says, 'All y^{e} falte I could find in him, he was y^{e} sobrist youth that ever I did see, but my hope is that he had more metill in my absence than I could parswad him to in my presence.' 'Dr. Fleetwood, his wife, and Queen Kate scold grievously, that Monsr. Jehan is kept noe better in cloaths.' To be correct in all matters of school etiquette was doubtless as important in the seventeenth century as it is in the nineteenth, and a special sort of taper was just then in fashion at Dr. Fleetwood's. 'Je vous prie,' Jack writes, 'de manvoier de la chandelle de cirre entortillé, car tous les garçons en ont pour brullay et moy ie n'en ay point pour moy.' In school Jack's diligence is commended by his master; he is 'very ingenious[1] March 1655 and quick in understanding Arithmetick, wherein he hath made a very good progresse.' But Dr. Fleetwood's authority was tottering, and before Jack had completed a second year, his master was prohibited as a delinquent from keeping his school.

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[1] Ingenuous and ingenious are used interchangeably in the seventeenth century. 'Since Heaven is so glorious a state let us spend . . .

May 21, 1656

'It is a generall consern,' wrote Doll Leake, 'the puting to silenc thos good men; I pray God rase them frinds, and give us memory and constancy to live as we have binn taught.' In this case her wishes were fulfilled. Driven from his desk, the doctor was forthwith engaged by a Duchess, and his heretical opinions, religious and political, were kept for the home-consumption of her family, till the Restoration made them orthodox once more and advanced him to the Bishopric of Worcester.

This Duchess was an old acquaintance of the Verneys; Lady Mary Villiers, daughter of the great Duke of Buckingham, and widow of James Stuart, first Duke of Richmond, a devoted Royalist.[1] She was left with a boy and girl to educate, and her husband's orphan nephew, Charles Stuart, Lord Aubigny, whose father had fallen with Sir Edmund Verney at Edgehill. Lord Aubigny was the same age as Jack Verney; Esme Stuart, the Duke, was younger; after his premature death in 1660, his cousin succeeded him as third Duke of Richmond. Dr. Fleetwood was well provided for as

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all our study and industry, all our desires and stratagems, all our witty and ingenuous faculties towards the arriving thither' (Taylor, *Holy Dying*, ii. 4).

[1] Vol. ii. p. 401.

tutor to these two boys, and Jack met his old master and 'my lord Abigny in a coach agoing together,' but Jack was still at large.

Anne Hobart, always prompt to befriend Ralph's belongings, writes: 'I hear "swet Jack" must be sent far away by the Dockter; if you send him to me . . . he shall be carfully locked to as if he war my dearest child . . . If you will, he shall goo every day an hour to Mr. Castilon at my nes Healls and he shall hear him red laten—for french my hus will prat with him . . . . and he may larn to danc, so he will not quit los his tim.' Dr. Denton is full of schemes for 'placing Jack,' and his other nephew, Jack Fust. 'I have spoken with Ld. Mulgrave's chaplain (who teaches his son) to take the care of one or two, who saies for my (but sure he meanes his owne) sake, if it may be soe contrived to all contents, he will. The man I beleeve is very sufficient in parts, and for ought I know reasonable moderate in his opinions. The most difficult will be to place one or other neare to him; the best place is Kersey's, but whether neare enough I doubt.' 'There is an inconveniency called play if togeather,' the doctor adds, but he is sanguine enough 'to hope that happily that may be prevented by Kersey and others . . . . This is but last night's embryon, and you have time enough to ruminate uppon it. One other considerable inconvenience there is, which is that I doubt he will not be able to attend them, nor they him, above two

Dec. 1655

Dec. 13, 1655

or three houres a day, espetially this winter time. There is yet another which is that happily the chaplain may return (which depends on my Lord's augmentation of his salary) to Cambridge in the springe.' . . . 'Triplett who is to reside and teach at the Dutch embassador's, has also offered to take Jack; he will not care for above 8 or 10 at most.' Jan. 7, 1656

Sir Ralph already knew Mr. Kersey, with whom it was proposed the boys should live. Thomas Stafford had begged him 'to invite Mr. Kersey the Mathematition, and enquire of him upon what rates he useth to teach, lodg, and sojorn young men that desire to learn areathmatique and to write well; and whether hee hath roome for a scholler.' Mr. Kersey, in reply, wished it to be understood that he did not profess to give a commercial education, and that if the boy were 'to be fitted for a merchant or other trade, the best and readiest way (in my judgement) is to place him at Board with such as make that businesse only their profession, which in regard my imployment is for the most part abroad, I doe not undertake. But if his designe is only to learne some thing in the Mathematiques, I shall doe him what service I am able, if he can be conveniently lodged and dyeted neere my house; for I doe not board any neither have I at present any lodging to spare.' As Sir Edward Fust decided to send his Jack to Mr. Kersey's, Sir Ralph was willing to do the same: they were to pay twelve shillings a week each. Dr. Denton describes how 'Mons.' Jehan's September 1655 hart is here, and his body at this time: the 2 Johns doe not love to be asunder.' 'Jack hath noe mind to be at Lady Hobart's; Fust and he have not parted all this Christmas, sometimes here night and day, and sometimes there.' At Mr. Kersey's it appears that the boys must 'ly in a garrett, he havinge noe other lodging but the dininge roome and the chamber against it w^{ch} he cannot sever, and they'l be about 8s. a weeke more.' Sir Ralph 'had rather pay more then let Jack be in a cold garrett, considering the extremity of the season . . . . Uncle ffust will be of the same minde for his son too.' The father and uncle do their best in exhorting the pair to content themselves with a moderate amount of mischief, but Sir Ralph doubts 'the 2 young ones will bee to crafty for us old ones, and doe little there but play togeather, therfore I shall desire to send Jack to schole againe, with all y^{e} speed that may bee . . . . I pray read Jack's letter and charme him to obey it.' Jan. 1656

Two schools are now recommended, at Hammersmith, and at Kensington; 'either of those places are very convenient, if the Masters are good and carefull.' The master at Hammersmith has 'leave to teach,' but Mr. Turberville of Kensington is finally chosen. Sir Robert Fenn, who lives next door, says he 'is Master of French, Italian, Greeke, and Latine, and of Musicke, and he thinks him a very good schoolmaster.' Dr. Denton adds, 'You will easily ghesse how fitt Kensington is for Jack; if all will be taught as is pretended unto.' Dr. Denton is 'not very fond of his master's phitiognomy, yet I find Dr. Hodges the vicar of Kensington hath 2 sons there, and Baron Steele one son there. The Dr. lives in the towne, and the Baron hath a brother livinge in the towne, wch makes me hope he is better then he lookes for. Aunt Abercromby's boy was also at this school.' Aunt Doctor replenished Jack's wardrobe, and 'made choise of a very good chamber and . . . . tooke order to have it and his beddinge aired.' 'He hath yett noe chamber fellow, but there is expectacion of one of his old comrades and he makes choyse of him if he come.' Jack remained there three years. 'I am very sorry,' Mr. Turberville writes, 'it was not my happiness to have knowne him sooner. I would be loth by extenuating of others abilities to magnifie mine owne. But certainly much more might in the tyme he spent at Barne Elmes and Fulham have bin infused into his capacity, yet I doubt not but to give you a very sufficient assurance of his proficiency in a small tyme, both of his amendement in his writing, y^e^ mastery of his grammar and an indiferent Latine Author, his preservation of the ffrench and y^e^ command of his Violl, which I had rather you should imbibe with your owne eares then depend uppon my naked assurance. I hope your eldest sonne, with whome he now keepes his Christmas, can and will by his observacion afford you a large testimony. To atteine to all this, and to crowne his

Dec. 30, 1656

actions, one thing more I must insert that (in reality I speake it) he is very laborious and industrious to redeeme y^e^ tyme that is past and irrecoverable, and very observant of my advice, which are all as I conceive great symptomes of answering your expectac̄ons. . . . Sr, I begin to be tedious; I'le knock off, and not interrupt your more important affayres with any impertinencies, only give me leave to subscribe, Sr, your most humble devoted servant at all commands, Samuell Turbervile.' Jack's mastery of an 'indifferent' Latin Author could not have been great. He writes some six months afterwards, 'Honoratissime Pater Quæso condona me, quia non antea ad te scripsi, sed confiteor, fuit mea negligentia et non mia oblivio, iterum vero nusquam te fallam, si valeam scribere, terq; quaterq; te igitur oro ne irascaris mihi, scio te esse hominem nobiliorem, quam talibus Irasci, cognosco te adeo hominem esse, quod pudeat me relinquere stultitiam meam assumi in manus tuas, cognosco istas lineas non sensus esse, sed mea tamen est stoliditas eas legi a te pati, qui habes tot virtutes et noscis tam bene quomode uti iis, sic maneo et semper manebo. Ibedientiosimus tui fillius et servus servorum, Jo. Verneyius.'

It would be hard to say which is the more halting and painful (in both senses), Mun's French or Jack's Latin! Jack's diligence in his studies, though satisfactory to his master, did not always come up to Sir Ralph's strict standard. 'Truly Sr,' Jack writes, 'I doe mitily wonder how you should find me soe negligent towards my learning. I verily beleeve it was last Saturday when I came to London; but if you can afford a little time to riede on further you shall see . . . . For that day I was at Winser and bake againe, a horse Backe with my Master's consent, and not onely me, but also 4 other young Gentlemen and our Usher, for my Master would not trust us alone, and I had done some of my Busenesse on friday night, Because I would not goe and lose all Saturday morning; now Saturday in the after noone wee doe alwaise playe, and therefore I doe straingely wonder how that negligence should bee soe found for to lye in my Bosome. Indeed I should bee very glad for to see you heere and also my most Dear Brother for to accompaine you along This pleasant Roade.'

Music was a part of every gentleman's education, the Elizabethan opinion still happily prevailing, that it is the 'natural sweeter of our sour life, in any man's judgement that is not too sour,' and for music Jack had a real love and aptitude. Her sweet singing and guitar-playing must have been associated with all his childish recollections of his mother, and he wrote to his father from school:—'Heere folloeth a petition which I doe desire att your hands; that is that you would be pleased for to bestow the gittarre which was my Mother's on mee: you did give it mee when you went out of France, and then when I came over, you sayed I should not have it because it would bee broken att schoole ; that was a good reason, for wee lay 18 in a Chamber, but att this Schoole wee have but two to a Chamber, and wee keepe our Chamber doores loket and therfore noe body comes in but them which wee have a minde to lett in, nay and besides if they should come into the Chamber I have a Closet where I could putt it, but I am shoore there would bee noe nides [need]; if there laketh a key unto it, I will have owne made. Heere is owne thing more is to bee putt in, that is if my brother would have it then I doe not petition it of you, but hee hath a very good owne of his owne' (there were at least five guitars at Claydon), 'and I am shure hee would not bee my hindrance of it. That Gittarre which is in the wooden casse is of noe sound att all almost, and then it is very ugly ; it is very corse and rude, and I am sure that you will not use the other which I demand if you please : I have a great minde for to practise my Lessons which I have learnt. The Wioll hath putt mee in love with all sorts off musikes. My Master doth see mee proceede soe much of the Wioll that hee hath promised mee to teach mee for to pleay of the Lute when the Deyes groe longer ; hee hath also lent mee owne of his Wiolls this Christmasse for to practise on. I pray you not to denye mee that petition but lett it bee granted as your most humble and most obedient sonne Desires.' Sir Ralph notes on the outside of this appeal, 'I told him he should have it, or as good a one, but bid him let it rest till

I come upp.' 'Je vous demande mille pardons,' Jack replies, 'de toute la paine et du tracas que vous prenez pour moy . . . tousjour desmeurant juqu'au dernier souppir de ma vie, Monsieur, cher, honoré et aymé pere, Vostre tres humble et tres obeissant fils.'

Oct. 29, 1657 'I sent Jack to Doll,' writes Dr. Denton, 'that she might be an ey witness how fast he growes and might bring y^u the tale and tidings of it;' Aunt Sherard expresses the same with varied spelling—**Aug. 13, 1657** 'he groos tawle;' and Pen declares that 'he looks so faire that if he ware in woman's apparill he must look lovely in it.' His care of his dress is in marked **Nov. 1656** contrast to Mun's slovenliness: 'Mr. Denton the Taylour hath brought mee a sute of closes of the same Cloth that my Cloke is off: hee hath also brought mee a sote with a pair off uppur stokings, and a pair of under reade stockings.' . . . . 'I doe lake some blacke rubin for to make mee some cuffestrings and shoostrings. I have bought already one paire of each, but they are now almost worne out, and therefore I shall take one paire of shoostring against chrismas whether I goe to London or noe . . . it costeth me but a grote a yard. I doe allso take a hatt against christmas, for my oulde hatt which I have now is full of holes in the croune of it.'

'We shall make bold with out y^r leave to have **Jan. 3, 1657** him here this Xstmas,' the Doctor wrote, but Jack's conscience was not quite at ease. 'I hope you will not be angre att my being att London; there is none of the schollars left att Kensington but my Masters sonne, which is but a very little Lade of noe company att all, and my Brother was very willing I should bee with him.' A letter of Jack's to Mun, at the end of the holidays, illustrates the tidy habits of the one and the carelessness of the other. 'Deare Brother, I goe to Kensington tomorrow, and I humbly thanke you for the favours which you did for mee whilest you were in towne. You left your gittarre Case att Bremers, but I carried it away to Mr. Gape's and it lieth in the window, behind the trunke in the parlour. You left also att Bremers six points which are to be putt a bout your briches, but now I have them and will keepe them . . . if you bee at London on Shrove tuesday, I shall hope for to see you, for I will come and dine with Mrs. Gape. Soe I doe remaine your loving and most affectionate Brother Jo: Verney.' Jan. 13, 1657

We hear of the mild dissipation of Jack's going 'to eat a fritter on Shrove Tuesday' with the Doctor's family; these family visits paid and received, and an occasional ride, seem to have made up the sum of his amusements. 'Monsr. Jehan dined with us yesterday,' writes the doctor, and we would have kept him here, but because his Brother was not in y^e way to say Amen to it, he stole home againe . . . . theres your obedient Boy.' In November 1657 Jack had an attack of ague, and his master's son died of the smallpox. 'It was out of our house that hee Died; hee was buried Mar. 26, 1657 on the 11th day of this moneth,' Jack writes on the 19th, 'but there is noe danger of any furthur proceeding.' Jack himself was not satisfied; he was June, 1657 fifteen when he wrote to his father from Kensington: 'I pray bee not angre If you rede this that folloes, for If I had the disposing of myselfe, but that I have not, nor will not have, as long as you live, and as long as my Brother lives. But if I had, I would within 14 days goe and live with Mr. Kersie, maby 3 months or half a yeare for to learn to cast an account, and as soone as I should know all things perfect, I would goe and bind myselfe an apprintice unto some very good traydesman; and I doe know Lords sones which must be apprintices, and theire elder brother is worth 5 thousand pounds a yeare; as for example my Lord Cossellton.' [Castleton.]

Sir Ralph destined Jack for the bar, and was not desirous that he should have a purely commercial training; he had much else to occupy his mind, and at eighteen Jack is still complaining that he is taught little that is of any practical use. His father had him home for the summer, and the boys had a happy time together and paid a visit to Sir Roger at Wroxall with their father. After Mun's return to London, Jack writes a piteous May, 1659 lament from Claydon: 'out of this greivous Dull and Sadd, Lamentable Mournefull place I doe send you foolish nonsensicall lines, which truly I am ashaimed to send from so Hideous a plaice (for lacke of your Compaynye) to soe Jolly a place as London.

Melampo and Sylvio present there sarvises unto you and that most Respectively. Wee have not a Ducke more now then when you was here, yett there is an honest Moorehen doth sitt upon foure eggs in a Bush att y^{e} side of y^{e} Killhouse Pond, w^{ch} I hope will come to a good Providence for that y^{e} Pond is Payled in on y^{e} Highway side. Two of your Claydon Lasses are gonne, for Walter King's daughter is marryed, there is owne, an John Roads his wife is dead (last night), there is y^{e} other. I know not what you would have more, for you have all the Newse att Lovely London, and likewise in the countrye; if you would know any about the Bassa [Pasha] of Aleppo you shall, but it must bee about 7 or 8 yeares hence.' Jack in the meanwhile read with Mr. Butterfield, who wrote of him: 'Mr. John is very civil and studious in his way, and if he prove no great clerke, I am perswaded he will prove a very honest civill gentleman and you may have much comfort in him.' But this was not at all Jack's idea of getting on. He attacks his father again and again about perfecting his education, because 'one must have some living now adayes. I doe veryly thinke that I am a greate deale fitter to bee [in] some trade then to bee a Layer . . . . I am afraid that you are a little displeased with your worme for desiring to bee an apprentice . . . I doe know that trading is much decayed, but it will bee some yeares before that I shall come unto it, and who knoweth but as it is fallen from good to bad in

May, 1659

a few yeares, soe in a few more it may happen to change from bad to good againe.' 'I never learned but very little Arethmeticke, for I never did learne any for wayte nor for measure w^ch ought to bee taught Rule by Rule with the other w^ch is money. I never learned but five Rules; it is true that I had begunne the 6th which is Called y^e Rule of 3, but I was never perfect in it; as for all the other five, although that I have not looked over them this 3 yeares thourouly yett I know that in one day I canne make them all perfect againe. But I hope that Whatsoever livelyhood I shall assume to my self (with your consent) I shall bee able to goe through, but it must bee Christo Auxiliante.' Sir Ralph so far consented to Jack's schemes as to send him to a Mr. Rich, reserving his final decision till he had taken more advice. Lady Hobart visits Jack and reports that he 'is very will and licks his way as will;' it was not difficult to be taught classics, but arithmetic was a branch of wisdom to be dug for more than for hid treasures; Jack would willingly give all that he had to acquire it, 'although it would bee but (as it were) a cromme or bitte in a loafe.' Sir Ralph asks Mr. Wakefield of Edmonton to give him an opinion. Mr. Wakefield speaks of Jack's industry and patience . . . . His M^r told mee that yo^r sonne had done all his Arithmaticke questions, first fouley in paper, untill hee was perfecte in them, and then entered them faire into his Booke. Soe that I conceave, having now learnt the Theory, hee

Sept. 1659

will be easily brought to the Practicke parte. . . . Mr. Riche tells mee that hee will putt him upon merchant accomptes, w^ch^ cannot bee amisse in regard they will bee the lesse strange to him when hee comes to keepe them ; though merchants doe differ much in the manner of keeping theire accomptes. . . Hee writes an indifferent good hand but I feare it is such a sett hand that I beleeve he is slow att itt, yett I presume Practice will quicken his Hand.' With regard to an apprenticeship he says, 'I doe nott know as these uncertayne tymes are, whom to advise you too, though I have very dilligently enquired of divers. The Spanish Trade att present you know is loste, w^{ch} was almost a 4th p^{rt} of our employment. To the east country and Hamburg trade you know I was brought up myselfe, w^{ch} is accompted the surest trade ; Butt neither my Broth^{r} nor my selfe, could find any great good to bee done by itt ; only some Auntient Rich-men, who followes itt as close as the Pack-Horses goes weekely ; for the Barbadoes, New England, and all the Ilands, though many getts money by that trade, yet I should never advise any ffreinds of myne to breed up his sonne too itt. And for the Turkey East and West India Trade, without itt bee some perticular men that have the knacke of itt, nott one in 3 of them thrives, soe that those w^{ch} doe itt makes them soe high that they aske and have £500, and sometymes more with an apprentice, w^{ch} makes mee conceave myselfe lesse able, and itt to bee of more hassard and difficulty then ever anything you putt mee upon before. I shall make a further enquiry, and if I heare anything worthy of yo^{r} notice shall write you. Itt being in my judgement, too, high tyme, if you intend yo^{r} sonne for a merchant speedily to looke out for a Place for him; Hee being now very well growne, and 18 yeares of Age. For w^{ch} reason I have knowen some men to refuse the taking of an Apprentice.'

By the end of the year 1659, Jack was rewarded for his persistent diligence by obtaining the long-desired position of merchant's apprentice. Mr. Wakefield, the pessimist, had failed to find an opening, but Sir Roger Burgoyne, who had a brother in the City, after careful inquiry, agreed with Mr. Gabriel Roberts, a London merchant 'trading to the Levant seas,' to receive Jack, with a premium of £400, 'the same sum my brother had from Sir James Harrington.' Sir Ralph further bound himself to Mr. Roberts for a thousand pounds. A copy of the bond still exists, and the printed indenture, signed by Sir Roger, John Buckworth, and Gabriel Roberts. The terms of it are very quaint, stringent, and minute. The agreement is for seven years. Jack is received at once for a fortnight on trial. 'For his clothes,' Sir Roger writes, 'Mr. Roberts is to finde him after those are worn out that he carries along with him, whether on this side the sea or the other. . . . For the sending of him over at a certain time, my brother thinks it needless to stand upon it; and for the return of the monys or any part of it in case he dies, he [Mr. Roberts] will not be obliged to it further then by word of mouth . . . for returning yo^{r} sonn back againe to you if yo^{r} other should dye, his ans^{r}; that if his brother dies before he goes over you shall have him, but if he be upon employment beyond sea, he will be contented to part with him provided he may have 10 or 12 mounths warning for to provide another in his roome, otherwise it may be much for his prejudice. . . . For his learning Italian it is to little purpose. . . . When you return there may be a review of all theise passages, and I trust to yo^{r} full content.' Sir Ralph then came up to London, the seal was set to the bond, and Jack was really an apprentice at last. The choice made for him of a master proved a very fortunate one. Gabriel Roberts came of a Welsh family, natives of Beaumaris,[1] then so thriving a town that a proverb ran that men went to Carnarvon for lawyers, to Conway for gentlemen, and to Beaumaris for merchants.

His father, Lewis Roberts, a distinguished member of the Levant Company, had published in 1638, 'The Merchantes Mappe of Commerce'—the result of 'my own 12 years collections during my abode and employment in many parts of the world. The foundation of it is laid upon the knowledge of geography and of the use of the Maps and Sea-cards in general, so delightful, profitable, and necessary to the merchant.' He proposed to give an exhaustive account of 'the natural products, artificial commodities, manufactures, coins, weights, measures, bills of exchange, etc. of most princes and republics,' but finding this knowledge too vast to be contained within the boards of a folio, 'I was constrained,' says the zealous Welshman, 'with the wind-scanted Sea man, to cast about again and limit myself to a narrow scantling.'

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[1] I am indebted to the kindness of the Ven. Archdeacon D. R. Thomas of Montgomery for information about him.

The author's friend, Izaak Walton, his cousin 'Robert Roberts, of Llanvair in Anglesey,' and others, prefaced the book with some complimentary verses; and in this company of bards his little nine-year-old son Gabriel piped in his childish treble:

To my most deare Father, Mr. Lewes Roberts, Merchant.

A Father's love may well excuse
The weaknesse of my Infant Muse,
Yet ('mongst the rest that praise thy *Pen*)
As last admit me say—*Amen.*

The poetical child had now settled down to the hard prose of business life in the city, but had kept his warm Welsh heart and generous sympathies.

In allowing Jack to be bound to a citizen of London, Sir Ralph had risen superior to many prejudices of his age and his class. The tendency of the civil war had been to bring the profession of arms once more to the front, as the only one befitting a gentleman; although even so great a stickler for social etiquette as Chamberlayn considered that, 'in England as well as in Italy, to become a merchant of Foreign commerce hath been allowed as no disparagement to a gentleman born, especially to a younger brother.' On the other hand such few apprentices as were 'Persons of good Quality' gave offence to the city by affecting 'to go in costly apparel, and wear weapons, and to frequent schools of dancing, fencing, and music.' Proclamations of the Lord Mayor and Orders of Common Council were constantly directed against such irregularities. Every article of an apprentice's dress was accurately defined; he was expressly forbidden to wear lace, embroidery in crewell or metal, any 'cost of needlework, or any silke in or about any part of his apparel'; there was special legislation even for his nightcap. Jack was therefore bound to wear nothing but what his master provided, but if Mr. Gabriel Roberts shared his countrymen's love of music as well as of poetry, we may hope that he relaxed in favour of Jack's cherished guitar the rule which forbade an apprentice to own a musical instrument.

When the New Year 1660 dawned darkly upon England, to Jack the future seemed very bright, for he had planted his foot on the first step of the ladder that was to lead to success and honour. Sir Roger wrote: 'I saw both your son and Mr. Roberts yessterday; they are now ingaged, and that in the most distracted times that ever cam.' The Levant Company itself was prosperous enough, and was diverting from the Venetians the largest part of the trade with the East. Lewis Roberts describes the great number of ships and sailors in its employ.

'I am not a little satisfied in this kind of life

Feb. 1, 1660 which you have done mee the honour for to let mee choose,' Jack writes to Sir Ralph, 'and I hope it will bee noe less satisfactory to you then if I had beene an Inns of Court Gentleman.' A few weeks later he is in the full tide of bustle and importance, his presence in the warehouse is so necessary that he can March 14, 1660 scarcely speak to Aunt Pen. 'I rec^{d} yours of y^{e} 11th Ap: As concerning the liking of my Trade I assure you (from my hearte) that I never delighted in any play when I was at Schoole nor in any thing else soe much as I doe in this trade, and alsoe in hearing of Business both inland and outland. I assure you alsoe that if I could doe my Mr. tenn times more servise then now I doe, I should doe it with a real gladdnesse. I hope that I shall soe contrive my businesse that there may bee noe lett in the way to hinder my going Beyond Sea betweene Michelmasse and Christmasse; although it will be a sad voyage with me for parting from soe Deare a ffather and Brother, yett the joy which I shall have after my Returne (if God bee my Guide) will farre excede the sorrow, butt of this thought more when the time shall serve. My Aunt Penelope Denton was here on the 12th inst. And shee would have stayed till I had writt a Letter to have sent by my Uncle Verney, butt I had noe leasure att all to writte, by reason of our selling of a greate parcell of silke w^{ch} was that day to bee delivered, and at the day of delivery we have a little trouble in weighing of itt and severall other things, as writting bonds, Bill of Parcells, &c., wherefore I could not then writt butt was faine to Acquainte her with my buisnesse, to cause her to be soone gone, for that my Mr. was all the while in the Warehouse with him w^{ch} brought y^{e} Silke.' 'Mr. Roberts doth not att all decline from his former kindnesse, but hath taught mee to keepe Marchants Bookes, which indeed is not ordonary. The Gentlewomen likewise continue in their former kindness unto me, And I still continue att Table with them, soe If you will be pleased (if you thinke fitt) this lent to send mee any sort of your pyes to Give unto them, I shall, whether or no, continue your most humble and most obedient son and sarvant.' Claydon pies are duly sent; the last 'was a very good one,' John writes, 'but none can tell what it is, some are of opinion of one thing some of another, but most that it is Wild Bore.' The fair well-mannered youth was no doubt a pleasant addition to the 'Gentlewomen's' society; and they showed their kindness in a practical way a few weeks later by promptly sending for a 'chirurgion' when he had a 'small mischance about 10 of the Clock att night; a sckillett of hott Lye slipt in the fire, and scalded the hind part of my right legg.' Jack had frequent visitors, and if Mrs. Gabriel Roberts and her daughters craned their necks out of window to see the young apprentice's fashionable relations, they probably derived some feminine satisfaction in contrasting the shabbiness of Aunt Penelope's attire with their own rich silk gowns and riding-hoods, for the

Mar. 6, 1660

worthy merchant was prospering greatly. 'Yesthar-day I went unporpos to see my nephew Jack Verney,' she wrote. 'I found him very well and very earnest up on his implyment and I was hugly plesd to see him so well satisfid in y^e way y^t he is now.' 'In earnest I do beelive in a short time my nevey Jack will be as tall as my father. I should be glad he ware so.'

Mar. 28, 1660

July 18, 1660

With his arduous duties in the shop, and in the acquiring of his master's 'art,' Jack had but little time for letter-writing or for holiday-making during the first 18 months of his apprenticeship, but he was well content. When he did write it was with such conceits and flourishes, as no other pen in the family aspired to.

Mar. 14, 1660

'Noble Festus, And Loveing Brother, What time I could possibly snatch out of the Jawes of Necessity I have bestowed in the writing or in the representative of this my affective letter unto you, and I desire to bee excused of your Jobs patience for that your anger hath not checked my negligence; but now I see that you, as a Q. ffabius Maximus, have governed your deserved anger as hee did his Army, and soe did incerase his love among the Senatours and Commons of Rome, soe have you inflamed my affection for you,' &c.

His mind continually ran on the golden prospect of going 'beyond sea'; and Alderman William Love, who advises Sir Ralph in the matter, writes: 'Since Mr. Roberts's returne to towne, I have discoursed wth him about your sonne, and find him (as formerly)

Sept 10, 1661

a little troubled that his Brother hath left his affaires in Aleppo with Mr. Sheppard, yet still resolved to send your sonne thither by the first ship (haveing quite laid by the thought of Smyrna) and if Mr. Shepperd will not assist him gratis, then to make the best agreement he can for the first yeare; after which he hopes your sonne will be a noune Substantive. Towards his charges of setting out I find his M^r^ enclined to give him ten or twelve pounds (as he saith his Master did him) w^ch^ will not be sufficient, but if he performe in other respects he may be borne with in that. There rests onely to tell you the time of his going, and that is now somewhat uncertaine by reason of Gen. Montagu's late attempt uppon Argies [Algiers]; be the issue whereof good or bad (for we have yet no certain newes) I feare the great Turke will so resent it as to seize our estates in his dominions, if not affront the Ambass^r^; perhaps both. I wish I may be mistaken, yet to me it seemes too hazardous to adventure more estate thither till we hear how what already there is like to fare. If the majority of the comp: be of that mind sixe moneths may pass ere your sonne can goe; if otherwise he may goe about December, though I cannot beleeve it.'

Sir Ralph replies: 'I see you have not been unmindfull of my desires concerning my young Marchant. . . . The truth is, I am so perfectly ignorant in all matters of this nature, that I am necessitated to give you farre more trouble then I can justifie . . . my most humble service to your good lady I beseech you.'

In the autumn of 1661 Jack went home, and Sir Ralph writes on his return to Mr. Roberts, 'I humbly thanke you for my sonn's being heere thus long; truly hee had been with you at your time appointed but that some of my friendes pressed mee much to let him stay to goe upp with them, which I hope hath not been to your prejudice. I confesse it was against my will and his too in respect his time was out, but you know woemen are importunate, and will not easily bee denied; therefore I presume you will the more willingly excuse both him and mee.' Jack's conscience on the point of outstaying his leave was evidently as tender as ever! He follows the events of the mercantile world with keen interest, and in a letter to his father gives a list of merchants who had failed: 'Among ye rest the 2 Wrights of Genoa, having from thence advice of it, (Mr. Bourne's Couzin,) Mr. John Sweeft and Mr. Delbo of London both broke in one day last weeke; alsoe y^e two Mr. Clearks last weeke and severall others. And for y^e honour of red Garter, Sir William Gardener[1] (as it is all over London spoken) just reddy to breake, his bills of Exch: being all protested at Liccorne. (God be thanked) my master had not to doe with any of them.'

Oct. 6, 1661

Jan. 22, 1662

Sir Ralph already made use of his 'prentice son in his business capacity, and Jack provides with extreme care and minuteness for the transmission to Claydon of two cases of young vines. With the near prospect of leaving England for many years, Jack wrote to Sir Ralph: 'Ever Honoured Father, I take y^e boldness to ask you a question which (if it please you) to resolve in a letter from you, yet if you thinke it not fitt I should know I desire your pardon. Accidentally discoursing with a friend of myne, who is not unknown in those things we discoursed on, at last our discourse fell upon my (intended) estate, which causes me to desire of you to know about (I say about) what estate you intend me at first and last. This question I could have asked you before your departure the towne, but that I fear'd you'd know of me what those words were which causes my so suddain curiosity.' His habitual candour makes him add in a postscript—'Since y^e above I thought fit to tell you that the person within mentioned was my Brother, but I would not have you take any notice of it to him in the least, nor (if you should) give me an answer according to his words, but give it me as it is asked, cordially, with this proviso that it doth not at all displease you so to do.' Jan. 16, 1662

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[1] Of Rocke Court, Hants, one of the sixty-eight Knights of the Bath made at Charles II.'s coronation.

Despite the respectful tone of this letter, Sir Ralph is evidently a good deal annoyed that a son of one-and-twenty should wish to know anything of his future prospects. 'As to what you desire about knowing what estate I intend you at first and last, I confesse you may well thinke I cannot but woonder Jan. 20, 1662 at your simple curiosity. I doe not understand what you meane by First, for now you are going to a place where I presume your gaines will not only keepe you, but if you behave yourselfe well, I hope you may lay upp Money too, or else the greate charge I was at when I bound you (and since too) was but ill-bestowed. But as to the other, you must know that children doe not use to chatechize theire Fathers what Estate they intend to leave them, nor indeed can I tell you if I would, for tis like to bee more or lesse as you carrie yourselfe towards me and towards your Master . . . if you keepe lewd company, and by drinkinge, gaminge, or your owne idlenesse loose your reputation, bee confident you will thereby also loose my affection, and your Portion too. Therefore as you tender my satisfaction and your owne advantage, carry yourselfe soberly, Honestly, and painfully, and then I shall thinke nothing too much for you. Now you know my intention and resolution, God in Mercy direct you for the best ; this is and ever shall bee the prayers of your affectionate Father.'

Sir Ralph might write severely of a breach of filial etiquette, as he understood it, but his affection for the son about to be parted from him for 12 years was very tender and deep. He engaged Soest, the rival of Lely, to paint his portrait, and being dissatisfied with the first result induced him to 'mend' it before Jack left England. In March 1662 'the King hath granted a Convoy to the

Levant ship upon those conditions, to depart with a Smirna shipp and all other shipps that can be ready, then to set saile.' 'Most Hon: Father,' Jack writes, 'this is to let you know that the Capt. of the shipp holds his resolution to be in the Downes by the 15th instant; so that now if you please to give order to your Cooke for a Pye, if it comes by the next weekes carrier it will not be to soone; alsoe if you please send me 2 or 3 winter cheeses w^{ch} I hope to carry to Aleppo. they being there in great esteeme. The next week I shall send my things aboard. I suppose by y^e 10^{th} present y^e shipp may depart from Gravesend towards y^e Downes whether I intend to ride post to meet her. I have 3 Bottles belonging to a cellar of myne w^{ch} I thinke to send to Mr. Gapes, there to be fil'd with strong waters. I suppose they all hold somewhat above 3 pintes. Mr. G. Roberts a day or two since gave me 2 sheetes of paper of advise and some other particulars, which at your comming to towne. if it please you, you may see. . . . He intitles it on the backe side, viz. Commission given to John Verney now bound for Aleppo in Siria, upon the Dover Marchant, whom God preserve, Gabriel Roberts.' April 2, 1662

Sir Ralph enters into every detail of his son's outfit with his usual careful kindness; Jack agrees to his suggestion 'that the meat baked in Potts will be (as much or) more satisfactory to me than were it in Paste, considering all the reasons noted downe in yours, but espetially carredge, w^{ch} will be farr April 3, 1662 easier to doe in Pots then in Crust, and I had demanded this way at first but that I don't remember I ever saw any in that maner at Claydon.'

Mr. Roberts supplied £20 towards his outfit, which cost about £50, including £10 for his outlay on the journey.[1] John had his arms 'sett on his spoon,' he took his 'Viol and a bible servis and a leather case,' costing 8*s.* 6*d.*, and Sir Ralph spent as much again in the purchase of Taylor's 'Holy Living and Dying,' Bishop Andrews' 'Devotions,' Gerard's 'Meditations,' and the 'Imitation of Christ.' The world of books is strangely small. Three of Sir Ralph's four favourites are still alive and doing good service. Sir Ralph had spent the last few weeks with Jack in London, and he accompanied him as far as Gravesend, where they parted on the 29th April, 1662. Jack sent a few hasty blotted lines to his 'Ever Hon^d Father. . . This is onely to present my duty unto you and to begg your blessing w^ch I did not the last night.' He wrote the next day from Deal, 'Yesterday about 6 a Clock I set forward from Gravesend and went to Sidenbourne 18 miles on this

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[1] '*Noate of divers things provided for Jack's voyage*':—

Holland for caps, 'hanketchers,' and doublets	£1	7	0
Lace for the caps		4	9
Cloth for 2 Pair of Socks		8	6
6 Pair thread stirrup stockings		16	0
'2 Garnish of buttons' for 2 Handkerchiefs		3	4
2 Pair of white Stockings	2	0	0
6 pr. of Shoes and 1 pr. Slippers	1	9	10
7 pr. Gloves		9	0
A Sea Bedd and bolster, Rugg, and Pillow	1	17	6
and Tailor's bill for	£16	10	0

side ; from thence this morning I departed and came first to Canterbury 15 miles on this side, where I was forced to stay 3 or 4 houres because horses were scarce, and indeed but 2 to be had all over y^e^ City, and them very deare, soe that I went to y^e^ Cathedrall and there heard servis said and sung by y^e^ Coristers ; after which I came to Deale, and there found that the Convoy was gone with a Smirna shipp. Here I am likely to stay, for y^e^ wind is soe contrary that our shipp cannot come over the flatts. Here is not at present any merchant shipps at all ; before the towne lieth y^e^ Monke frygot. now admirall of y^e^ Downes, as alsoe another of His Majestyes frygots. Pray remember me very kindly to my uncle Dr. Denton, and assure him I am very sory for coming away without taking my leave of him. . . If you have occasion to write me, you may send it downe post, directing it to me, passenger on the Dover marchant.' To Mun he says : ' For your expences, gifts, and troublesome journey, thanks are to small ; brotherly affection I have none to add to that w^ch^ I had for you before ; returnes in their same kind is for me you know impossible, soe that I must remayne your debtor for everything. Pray from me give my Cosin Alex^r^ Denton (with if you can as passionate in expression as I doe write it) thankes for all his favours towards me and assure him . . . , before I depart I shall leave a letter for him.' He was delayed till the 4^th^ of May, when he writes his last letter to his father.

'This morning before 8, God willing, if y^e wind holds, I shall set sayle for Livorno whether God send us in safety: truly I am very glad wee shall depart soe soone, for this is a very cut-throat place, and besides for a farther helpe to away with money I was faine to lay in 20*s.* more for fresh provision, by reason that one of our passengers is fallen sicke and soe wee casted up our money short, soe that wee lay in 6*l.* a peece. Sheepe cost us here 22*s.* y^e sheepe: hens 3*s.* y^e couple: barley 40*s.* y^e quarter: oats 3*s.* y^e bushell: duckes 2*s.* y^e couple, etc.; they have not bene knowne soe deare this good while, but there hath beene such great shipping of late that all things are deare. Most of y^e Poultry is now ingrost for the Jamaca shipps, soe that we had much adoe to get 40 couple notwithstanding it is market day at Sandwich. Sir having but little time I humbly begg your blessing, prayers, and leave to be your most humble and most obedient sonn.' Mun's affectionate note in reply to Jack's last, cannot have reached him; it was chiefly to say—'The Love of Heaven be with you and blesse you, my deare brother.' May 5, 1662

The journey to Aleppo was accomplished in 3½ months. Jack wrote home every few weeks as occasion offered. Having fallen in with a homeward-bound frigate off Cape St. Mary, he has only time for a hasty note to his father. May 14, 1662 'On May the 6^{th} we mett with the Queene and the fleet her convoy, off of Faymouth; this morning we espyed a fleet of 26 saile of shipps which are yet unknowne to us, they being at sterne ; we also this morning espyed a fleet of 18 saile at head among w^{ch} was the Assistance frigot by w^{ch} I send you this.' The next is from Leghorn. 'This is to advise you of my arrivall into this Port from whence I hope to be gonn in 8 or 10 dayes. I should have given you an account of my arrivall sooner but that I departed for Pisa, Florence, etc., to see those sights w^{ch} are at St. Jn's tide selebrated in the last city, where I have continued this 9 dayes. S^{r} it being very late at night and myselfe somewhat tyred having come post this day from fflorence (w^{ch} is 60 miles) notwithstanding the heat of y^{e} weather and y^{e} Badd horses I shall conclude, assuring you to write you somewhat more larger by some Gentlemen w^{ch} lately came from Aleppo and are proceeding for England over land in 40 Dayes.' Jack comes across Dr. Kirton at Florence, who begs to send his old friend Sir Ralph his 'most humble servis.' He reaches Scanderoon on July 26, 1662, 'having toucht noe where but at Cyprus.' The 20th of August finds him arrived at Aleppo, whence he writes to his brother a string of requests ; 'the shipps being upon departure.' he ends abruptly. 'The thankes for y^{e} trouble I putt you to at my departure from England . . . is but an usher for another, for I must hereby desire you to buy me saddle stirrups with accom̃odac̃on to hang holsters on, alsoe a lite bitt and raynes for it. . . . A sortment of Lyro Cioll strings ; at least 5

June 20–30, 1662

Terebles, 4 seconds, 3 thirds, 1 fourth, 1 fifth, and 1 sixth, and a bridge;' his own is broken and glued together again, but not right. His fair hair that Soest had painted so carefully 'being already almost all come off,' he asks for a wig, and he 'must goe in the Turkish mode before it comes.'

It was a far cry from Mr. Gabriel Roberts' back shop in the City, where the bales of silk were weighed, to the flat white roofs, the domes and minarets of the mosques, and the burning sunshine of a Syrian summer, and we long to know something of Jack's impressions on arrival. The youth who spent the time while waiting for relays, in attending the choral service in Canterbury Cathedral; and who rode 60 miles of dusty road twice over on bad post-horses to witness the Feast of St. John the Baptist in the City of Flowers, must have had a mind that was not fed on 'marchants' accompts' alone. It was easier to ask for stirrup leathers and viol strings, than to write down what he felt on leaving the familiar surroundings of the English merchant ship to begin life alone on that glaring foreign shore; and it may be that as he folded and sealed his packet of home letters, his mind's eye was filled, not with the fine Moorish architecture, the string of pack-camels, and the picturesque crowd of dark-skinned and turbaned figures, but with the homely brick walls, the soft grey skies, and the branching elm trees of Claydon.

CHAPTER XI.

THE NEW DISEASE AT CLAYDON.

'A time to die.'

1657–1658.

A CERTAIN form of fever and ague, known during the time of the Civil War as 'the New Disease,' swept over several counties in 1657–8, carried off many familiar faces at Claydon and Hillesden, and united in a common death men who in life had long been foes and rivals.

The summer had seen the establishment of Cromwell's second protectorate. 'Yesterday his Highness was in Westminster Hall,' writes an eyewitness, 'with the Parl^t the L^d Mayor & Aldermen & the Judges, where he took an oath & was proclaimed Lord Protector of England, Scotland & Ireland, with three great shouts made by the soldiers & some few others. I was there & saw him in his King-like robes. He came through the Hall in great state.'[1] Sir Ralph was once more engrossed in his building and planting, so much so indeed that Aunt Sherard writes: 'I am in som feres as you air sent to Jamaicos amongest the

June 27, 1657

May 14, 1657

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[1] Roger Fleming in the Fleming MSS. Hist. MSS. Com. 1890, No. 319.

gold findors, but if you air within the compas of being hurd from, pray let me have the hapines of A line or tow from you.'

The epidemic broke out in the Claydon villages at the close of a hot summer, and soon spread to the House. William Gape describes how people are flocking up to town from the country districts to avoid infection. Sir Ralph, on the contrary, who is away on a visit, hurries back to Claydon to do his best for the sick in the villages as soon as he hears of the outbreak. Mrs. Westerholt is ill, and one after another of Sir Ralph's servants and workmen are disabled. Aug. 13, 1657 'The Bay Mare is unable to fetch the bricks, she has been lent "to Roger Deely" to fetch a surgeon to his sonn, whose Heele is gangreaned.' Aug. 27, 1657 'I am sorry to heare Parson Aris is in any dainger,' writes Dr. Denton, 'I pray God fitt him and us for life and death. I long to heare of him. There is one dead of the plauge this weeke att White chappell.' The Rector's strength did not hold out for many days; Aug. 31, 1657 he died on August 29. The Doctor is 'heartily sorry for Honest Parson Aris. I doubt she will not live longe after. For all the little Peekes that were betweene you, I wish noe worse may succeed.' 'I am confident,' writes Penelope, 'M^{rs} Aris is a very sadd widdow, I pitty her with all my hart.' Sir Ralph desires to have 'the 2 Church Bookes, or any such publique papers or noates concerning the Church or Towne . . . . all papers concerning the Parsonage as letters & noates, and all papers or letters concerning any differences betweene M^r Aris & me, or my Father and Him, that they may be burnt.' Mr. Aris was buried, on September 1, at Middle Claydon, having been Rector of the Parish for twenty-seven years. The last time his name appears in the registers, which he had written up so carefully, is at the burial of 'Thomas Faulkener formerly Dairyman & Servant to M^r Aris, Rector,' who had kept his master's memory green for more than fifty years. Ralph Roades, the truculent Parish Clerk, lived out the century, but his brother the Steward, Mr. Aris' doughty opponent and rival, was the next to be attacked by the fever. May 9, 1711

Sir Ralph writes to Lady Warwick: 'Madame, I had not a servant to send to satisfie my selfe of the condition of your health, for all these parts have been sorely visited, and particularly this very Towne, in soe high a manner, that since I writ last to your Ladishipp, heere hath been 40 or 50 sick at a time, whereof the Parson, and 8, or 9 more are already dead, and at this hower many are dangerously sick, and still sicken dayly. I thanke God my selfe & sonne are well, but (excepting one) there is not a man servant in my house that hath not been very ill, and are yet soe weake, that I am forced to hier others to assist & tend them.' This description recalls our own household experiences of the influenza. Mrs. Sherard is in the same case: she herself 'hath gott this new disease, or a longe tertian or a Quarterne, be which it will, it handles her very severely, and there Sept. 17, 1657 went 7 or 8 one day sick out of her house that came well in.' She herself writes: 'On my well dayes I macke A shift to creepe downe to diner and have a good stomack to my meaght, but I am faine to eaght but A litill.' Sir Roger's family had also 'drunk pretty deeply of that cup.' The Doctor considers that 'London is the healthiest place.'

The same epidemic is mentioned by Lady Fanshawe,[1] as 'a very ill kind of fever of which many died, and it ran generally through all families;' she and her husband and her household fell sick of it: she ate 'neither flesh, nor fish, nor bread, but sage posset drink, & pancake or eggs, or now and then a turnip or carrot.' Lady Hobart had a more comfortable prescription. 'If you have a new dises in your toun pray have a car of yourself & goo to non of them; but drinck good ale for tis the gretis cordall that is: I live by the strenth of your malt.'

Will Roades's illness ran its course, and the anxiety about him was increased by the fact that Dr. Denton was unable to be with him. The Doctor had been overworked all the autumn. 'I was at Malden, where there is a very sick house,' he wrote; 'Charles & Dick [Goode] both sick, but recovered and about the house; & yett last night I was sent for post [from his farm on the Fens] for that Charles had fainted away. W. Gape is now with him, & how he doth I know not. Ben Moorwood, who married his sister, I doubt will dye of this new disease, there's alsoe

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[1] *Lady Fanshawe's Memoirs*, p. 125. London, 1829.

10 sick att this time in M^r^ Harvey's house. It reigns generally, I pray God blesse us all & fitt us for life and death.'

The Doctor went on to Thame Park to attend his old friend Lady Wenman and a young Hobart, who was taken dangerously ill while on a visit to her. He wrote thence: 'I longe to heare how Will & Michaud & Charles doe, and what you have done to them, certainly it is best to let Will bleede againe.' Two days later he writes: 'Hobart is fallen extreme ill (I feare of the small poxe) whom I have vomited and blooded, & it's now my business to get a lodginge for him at Thame (soe fearfull are they here). I was designed for Boarstall this day by promise, & from thence to Lady Verner, & to Sir Arthur Hasilrigge, but I doubt I shall be able to doe neyther. I see noe daunger of W^{m} R: & if he had followed your advice by taking of a vomitt & if that had not done it, then to have beene blooded, I beleeved he had beene well ere this. It is the best thinge & the surest & quickest he can yett doe, therefore I pray lett him have one yett. 3 full spoonfulls of the vomitinge liquor in possett drinke will doe well, & he may abide 4 the same night when he goes to rest; let him take the weight of vi^{ds} of Diascordium, the next day or the next but one, he may be blooded in the arme about 20 ounces.

Sept. 19, 1657

Sept. 21, 1657

Endorsed: 'W. Roade may open this letter if he will.' On the same day Sir Ralph wrote a long business letter to Roades. He had been to inquire after his sick daughter Miller, 'who rested much better this night. I hope she & you will mend too.'

The Doctor, mindful of Sir Ralph's anxieties, writes again from Thame Park: 'Hobart died on wenesday morninge & which is worse, his death was occasioned by 3 daies excessive drinking, he was buried in Thame church, with such decency as these times & my Lord's family could afford. . . . My ladies extreame illness these 3 or 4 daies hath contributed alsoe to hinder my journey to Ely. She hath had some ease this day, & soe I hope I may goe on munday. I longe to hear how W^m R. dothe. I pray make my excuse to him that I could not see him, for really I am extreame sorry that it fell out at such a time, that I could not possibly stirre, and indeed I have been soe tied to attendance, that I have not made one visitt since I came but to Wheatfields [to the Ishams], & which much discomfitts me I have not one horse that I can bestride with pleasure. Kate, after her love & service to you for your invitation, saies she thought you had more witt, then to invite people to trouble you when your Cooke & the other servants are soe sickly. . . . A little of the story of the mare & colt would not doe amisse. Vale. Yours, W^M D.' Sept. 25, 1657

By the time this letter arrived Will Roades was beyond the help of earthly remedies, and on the 28th of September, within a month of the Rector's funeral, the Steward was laid beside him in the little peaceful churchyard. The loss of these two men was a heavy blow to Sir

Ralph, though he had been quite aware of their failings; they had grown up with him, and both Parson and Steward were part of his familiar life at Claydon. 'Old friends are best,' Selden said, 'King James used to call for his old shoes: they were easiest for his feet,' and Sir Ralph agreed with King James.

'I no sooner hard of M^r^ Roads is deth,' Pen Denton wrote, 'but I was very sencible that you ware full of trouble,' and even Tom felt grateful 'in regard of his civill respect towards me when I was in want.' Oct. 7, 1657

Roades had gone on with his work to the last, and letters about the estate kept arriving for him during his illness and after his death. But all Sir Ralph's punctuality and preciseness had never made his agent into a good man of business. 'I am much troubled your man Rodes has left your accounts soe imperfect,' writes Nat Hobart, 'but alas poore man he was taken away soe suddenly that I beleeve he had not time to perfect them & his owne too.' July 28, 1656

Of the account he had to render to a higher than his earthly master, we may hope he had not been as unmindful; one of his untidy scrawls to Sir Ralph closes with these words: 'Only let me intreat you to pray for me to god so much as to keep me his servant which is my continual prayer, and then I hop my death will not com suddenly, for preparation is the only way that is the dutie of your humble servant Will: Roads.' July 28, 1656

John Roades was as little fit to succeed him in the management of the Claydon estate as Richard Cromwell was to succeed his father in the government of the Commonwealth; but, happier than Richard, the chance was not given him of displaying his incapacity. Sir Ralph took matters into his own hands, and wrote after six months of this experience: 'I have been & still am (besides all my other businesse) on such tickle terms with some of my tenants, who (contrary to my agreements & expectation) endeavour to kick upp 3 or 400*l.* a yeare into my hands at a few dayes warning, that I canot stirre a day from home, having too frequent occation to make new treaties with one or other of them, & haveing noe Bayliffe I am forced to doe it all myselfe.'

March 29, 1658

William Gape, the excellent apothecary, was also ailing in that sad autumn of 1657. 'Mally and your servant are very sorry wee shall not see Claydon this sommer; you may well beleive mee when I must tell you my voyse is lower then ever, my throate more soare, and which is worst of all I have suffered a great difficulty of breathing this fitt. These are all alarmes to tell mee whither I must goe and that my winter quarters are preparing for mee. God almighty sanctifie all these signes to mee that I may make a right use of his mercyes et fiat voluntas Domini.'

Oct. 9, 1657

The filling up of the living gave Sir Ralph great anxiety; he dreaded above all things that an aggressive Presbyterian or Independent should get hold of it. His neighbour, Mr. Duncombe, had recently appointed a clergyman to his living of Brick Hill, and a minister very distasteful to him had, at the same time, obtained the promise of it from the Government. After a protracted suit, Mr. Duncombe's nominee had been obliged to retire. Sir Ralph was determined that no applicant should be able to represent his living as vacant, so the breath was scarcely out of Parson Aris' body before he had offered it to the Rev. Edward Butterfield, of Preston Bissett, of whose talents as a peacemaker he had retained so agreeable an impression. Mr. Butterfield, who was a widower with children, accepted with alacrity ; but this was only the commencement of the business. Besides a ' donation, or a presentation, or both,' he was to produce a certificate that the parish desired him for their minister. Fortified with all the documents he could collect, Mr. Butterfield went to town to go through the searching ordeal of Cromwell's ' Triers.' The Protector was more anxious to secure ministers of high character and learning than to test their theological orthodoxy by any narrow standard. It was not, therefore, Mr. Butterfield's Church doctrines that were the subject of inquiry so much as his past life and ministry. The Triers had a wholesome distrust of testimonials, and accepted recommendations from those men only whose personal knowledge of the candidate was both intimate and recent. But having courted a safe obscurity in his rural living, it was difficult for a country parson of the old opinions to find a 'Commissioner Minister' from whom he could obtain such a recommendation. Sept. 10, 1657 'At my coming to London,' writes Mr. Butterfield, 'missing of the Doctor, I went to Sir Orlando Bridgman who told mee I wanted a Minister's hand to my certificat, and wisht mee to take witnes with mee to deliver in my presentation; so Mr Gape went wth mee about it. Then I was informed the like of the defect of my certificat, thereupon I took my horse intending for the country, but because they told mee I must have some Comissioner Ministers hands, or that were well known to the Tryers. I went to two Comiss: Ministers that I had a little acquaintance wth (not knowing any such neere us) who gave mee this test: that they had some personall knowledge of mee, & did verily beleeve that which the gent: had certifyed was true. With this I went back to the clarke, who assured mee this being yet short of the words of the Ordinance, would hardly passe; so I went to a Minister in London well known to the tryers, . . . who gave mee this test: that he had long since known mee to be a person of a godly sober blameles conversation, which are the words of the Ordin. yet by reason of this restrict *long since*, I doubt whether it may be sufficient: there hath beene no full comittee since my coming up, so that it hath little retarded my busines, onely it hath much saddened my thoughts and put mee somewt out of conceit wth the busines. I delivered your letter to Mr Drake, who gave mee very good words, after sent mee a letter to one M^r^ Cooper, one of the tryers that lives I know not where, and if he can, will be at Westminster fryday. Sir should these yet fail, I would desire you to send this inclosed to our Minister at Preston, and if he can returne it to you or send it up by our Carrier to be heare ready against Wednesday next I shall attend it so long, els I must intreat you to pitch upon some other person as soone as you can that you suffer not by more delay. I am Sir your very sad but true friend & servant, E. BUTTERFIELD.'

Sept. 12, 1657

Sir Ralph loses no time in replying: 'Mr. Butterfield,—Last night very late I received yours of the Tenth instant, & have already sent away your letter to M^r^ Pepps at Preston, who I presume (if hee bee at home) will dispatch your businesse, but I hope your worke will bee donn without it; if not, I pray come doune, & procure your owne certificate & then I doubt not, but you may have it in as ample manner as you please. I am glad you have deliver'd my presentation before Witnesse, soe that noe Legall advantage may bee taken: if they will not admit you, without a better certificate I pray apply your selfe to S^r^ Orlando Bridgman, & know of him what is fit to bee further donn for the preservation of your interest, & my owne, for I am resolved to doe all that in mee lies to place you neare mee, therfore bee not sadd, but rather let this little opposition make you more sollicitous in the businesse, & assure your selfe you shall not bee forsaken by your most affectionate friende to serve you, R. V.'

Mr. Butterfield, having at length satisfied the Triers, found a hot discussion raging, on his return to Claydon, between Widow Aris and her brother-in-law Nick as to the late Rector's liabilities: both appealed to him to settle the dispute. They differed as to the repayment of a sum of 20*l.* lent by John Denton to the Rector, and on many other matters. 'Sister,' wrote Nick Aris, . . . 'I have not time to give a full answer to soe pollitick a letter as yours is, being writ by advice of your councell. . . . I finde you expect my Oath, soe doe I yours, havinge farre the greater cause. . . . Sister, Wise men did beleeve you would have dealt more civiller with your husband's servant of 40 yeares standing & your owne of 26 yeares, but I aske nothing but justice from you.' The din of battle lasted several months, apparently to the great satisfaction of the disputants. But another question touched Mr. Butterfield more nearly. The rectory was much out of repair, and his claim for dilapidations against Mrs. Aris was a heavy one. He wrote to Sir Ralph in some discouragement. 'I hope God will some way or other answere my desires, either by enabling mee to undergoe & execute successfully what I have undertaken, or by presenting some fitter person to your approbation, to whom I shall cheerfully resigne all that little interest I have, & conclude the latter part of my dayes in peace & silence.' Mrs. Aris' voice seems to be ever ringing in his ears. 'Sir, I have, with as little satisfaction to myselfe as to the parties litigant,

Sept. 14, 1657

Feb. 14, 1658

composed the matters in suit between Mrs. Aris & Nick: Aris, & I have now the 15*l.* controversy in hand, as full of difficulty as the former every whit. How the wit of man should reconcile these contradictions & absurdities, maintained with such high protestations & improbabilities I see not. For my part I despair of receiving satisfaction, yet if things are not too foule, I am resolved to make an end of it. Tis pitty the dead man cannot be raised againe to resolve the riddle. I could even venture my Parsonage for satisfaction.' He compounded for his firstfruits, which came to 3*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.* 'You give me more thanks for ordering your businesse of your first-fruits,' writes Sir Ralph, 'then if I had payd the money out of my owne purse. I did not thinke you had [been] soe greate a courtier: next weeke I purpose to bee at home, & then I will quarrell with you for it, & thats all the disputes I intend to have with you, and I confesse my earnest desires to hasten the finishing of your house, that I might have more of your company & advice—for I can truly say, I respect you soe much, & love you so well, that I am confident I shall like Claydon much the better and spend more time there, when you are settled in it.' Feb. 18, 1658

Did the gentle Mr. Butterfield, who was nervously anxious to conciliate everybody, find it a task beyond his powers to dislodge Mrs. Aris from her old home, to take possession of it himself, and to wring from her the ever-odious charges for dilapidations?

Report said that she had taken to her bed with grief and vexation, which must have increased the difficulties of the situation. Whatever the explanation may be, scarce eight months of the lady's widowhood had elapsed before the fresh incumbent, with great submission, laid his heart and fortune at her feet, and married her with the least possible delay. So the ghost that troubled the new Rector's slumbers was laid; and though the dilapidations were further 'ravelled into' by the Patron and Cousin Dormer, the amount was a matter of indifference, now that Mrs. Butterfield could pay it out of one pocket into the other. The Rector indeed still toyed with his grievance. 'I cannot excuse M^r^ Aris his improvidence in letting things go so to rack,' he wrote a year later, 'which a little timely inspection might so easily have prevented, without any considerable charge to himselfe.'

There are few comments in the letters upon the marriage. Aunt Isham lived sufficiently far away to be able to say with a clear conscience that she thought it 'as sutable a mach as could be; but what with M^rs^ Aris' grife & her sicknes I thought it could not a bine so soone. And talkes will goe, for I was tolde all this tattle as she was abeade when she was maried . . . but I tolde them noe such thinge . . . but women doe mad thinges sometimes.' It was not the woman who seemed to be doing 'mad things' in the opinion of Claydon, but Sir Ralph prudently held his tongue, and was content to execute his friend's wedding errands in town. 'I would intreat you to remember mee in a bargaine of chaires & stooles for my Parlour,' wrote the Rector, who was refurnishing with great zeal, 'if you happen to light on any you think fitting: & I think 6 pieces of hanginge, if met with accidentally at the second hand, might all things considered be easyest had to furnish up the roome; but in this as in all other things I am willing to submit to your better judgment.' 'I would gladly bestow a matter of 8*l.* in Wainscot for my parlour,' he wrote again, 'rather then go to a much higher price for Hangings, & then I should like very well this painted lether for a suit of chaires & stooles, & Carpet too for it; but that may be resolved on timely enough, when the wainscot is ready to set up.'

Another time he asked Sir Ralph to consult Dr. Denton about 'Sister Tayler,' who was piteously afflicted with a strange infirmity in her stomach . . . that doth still follow her.' The Lady, however, to Mr. Butterfield's great annoyance, had not patience 'to expect an answer from London, but must needs send for one of the Mountebanks from Bucks, who tells her she is past physicke, but makes no question to recover her with looking on her, telling her 2 or 3 senseless stories & taking some of her moneys.' Jan. 3, 1659

In the troubled months of Richard Cromwell's protectorate, when all England is tossed about with uncertainty, Mr. Butterfield is comfortably settled at Claydon Rectory. 'The dangerous aspect of our state affairs troubles my thoughts not so much in reference to my own condition as the publique good.' He writes two days before Richard's fall : 'Tis a pleasant time in the country & quiet ; onely tradeing is dead & most men are full of feares.' Mr. Butterfield became the founder of a dynasty, as he and his son and grandson were Rectors of Middle Claydon for the next hundred years.

The 'ill wind' which had at least brought a benefice to a good man was still blowing in Bucks, and on October 17, 1657, the young Squire of Hillesden was carried off. The Civil War had laid heavy burdens upon shoulders too young to bear them, and Edmund Denton, as a mere boy, became the owner of an exhausted estate and of a mansion in ashes. With careless generosity he had squandered his wife's large fortune. Dr. Denton had repeatedly counselled prudence. He wrote to Sir Ralph : 'I knew not (though I advised it a yeare or two since) that Mun's resolution was to leave Bucks & to goe & live like Hermit poore in Glocestershire . . . it is most high time. I have examined his debt & I finde it above £17,000, besides Annuities, shop-bookes etc : soe that I cannot thinke it lesse then £20,000, and it is encreased in one yeare above £1,000. This will eat while he sleepes. We have advised with Ned [Sir Ed. Fust] about it very seriously & very sadly you may thinke ; & it is concluded that parcimoney will never pay it, noe nor a small sale. His wive's Land must pack, where in his power, which some say will pay 10 others 8,

Dec. 11, 1655

but we reckon betweene both, £9,000. . . . Cowley we say alsoe must pack, & some part alsoe of Hillesdon. This tasts bitter, but rather soe then all. One yeare will tell more . . . he is not in a condition to stand uppon small things . . . and he will doe all reasonable acts. He would have you satisfied . . . aske but reason, & it must not be denyed. Hee had better expose to sale then be driven to it. . . . It is noe time to have any differences with relations, neighbours, noe not clownes . . . or there will be a quarrel with the whole Bench. I have taken this thorne also out of his foot. to putt it in myne owne. He must not displease, a mere recognisance to him would be his ruine, noe man would dare buy of him, except Robbin Hoods pennyworths,[1] which would be his ruine. It was his & my father's ruine to sell only to pay interest, he hath hitherto but ridden the same horse. I am soe concerned for his condicion that it breakes me many an houres sleepe.' It does not appear that this scheme of retrenchment was carried out.

In the summer of 1656 a hastily scrawled note reached Dr. Denton from Edmund's next brother Alexander: 'I am much troubled for my Brother [George]. I can hardly persuade the Doctors to come to him, for they say they cannot helpe him. Neither can I procure a Minister to come to him, which troubles me very much hee being so insensible of Dying ; for I cannot but lament, & wish & desire

Aug. 1, 1656

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[1] Pieces of land sold for half their value.

the prayers of you all for him, who I doubt cannot now pray for himselfe.' George died the following day. His will is full of affectionate bequests to his brothers and sisters: he desires that his debt should be paid 'out of the moneyes lately received of Richard Berin, Linen draper.' He left to 'M^{r} William Okley 40*s.* to preach my Funerall sermon,' and desired to be buried 'in the Chancell of the Parish Church of Hillesdon at the discreation of my deare Brother Edmund Denton Esq^{re}.' In little more than a year his elder brother was laid beside him.

Nov. 17, 1657

Edmund Verney was ailing also with 'a loathinge of meat and queaziness of stomach,' and Dr. Denton wrote quite anxiously: 'We see yonnge men drop as well as old, and we cannot be too carefull one of another, our number decreasing soe dayly.'

'This particular Mortalyty to this sweet man' afflicts Cary extremely, 'so affectionat a frend as Mun Denton, so faithfull & good humoured A persone is rare to find.' Mrs. Isham also missed her nephew sorely; the older relations could always count upon a welcome at his board. She writes the next spring: 'I sent our nue man to call att Hilsdon & bringe me worde how they all doe, & but that I send to see them now & then, they may be all bureid a Live for any thinge I heare frome them selves: and sure itt would be contente to my minde if I could not thinke of them so much as I doe, but I loved the good man so well as is dead, as I shall love them I feare how ever. I cannot rite noe more itt doth so troble me.'

Alexander Denton, some seven weeks after his brother's death, is anxious lest the young widow at Hillesden should break through the strict etiquette of mourning by paying a quiet visit to a brother-in-law, and refers the question to Sir Ralph. 'Hillesdon. Sir, My sister Denton having very often upon all occasions most earnestly expressed mee to let her know if either I knew or heard anything shee did, or was like to doe, that might Argue any disrespect to her deare deceased Husband : shee alwaies professing her selfe altogether extreame ignorant of these sad ceremonyes of mourning ; although I am confident most expert in the reallity thereof : And I finding her departure hence to my bro : Woodwards so soone as her dolefull moneth is out, to bee by some very severely censured, now her chamber & house & servants are all in theyre black attyre : Thought myselfe very much engaged to let her know the sense, if I myselfe knew, whether it would also appeare so bad in the world, or that it were the custome not to remove in such case ; of which beeing altogether Ignorant I have therefore made this my Addresse to you . . . earnestly desiring your opinion herein with as much speed & privacy as may bee, what is the custome, & how her departure in this case is like to appeare in the eye of the world.' Dec. 3, 1657 In the interests of the poor young widow, and her three little boys, we should have preferred to submit the matter to Dr. Denton ; Sir Ralph was sure to be on the side of the 'ceremonyes,' but his reply has not come down to us.

June 30, 1657

An impoverished Royalist, Dr. John Castle, alleged that he had lent money to Sir Edmund, and pressed this summer for repayment in 'my extreme Necessities, who have lost above 6,000*l.*, for the Crime of my dutie to my late Master in my attendinge him at Oxford, as Clarke of his Privie Seale. . . . D^r Denton once told my brother Sir George Theobalde that you intended to pay me.' Sir Ralph, however, did not admit his liability for this debt.

Lady Gawdy was celebrating a great event in her family, the marriage of her eldest son Charles to Lady Mary Feilding, 'the pretty daughter of my Lord of Desmond' (brother of the Earl of Denbigh) 'with 4,000*l.*' Doll Leeke complains that he had been too much run after. 'I am sorry for our sex, for thay goe a beging,' but he is 'fixed at last.'

Sept. 4, 1657

She writes from Croweshall: 'M^r Gaudy was maried one Saterday was fortnight and at this time all the company is at Crowshall. You may ges how full our hous is whan my lady & all hir faimily of women ly in the vane rouff over the dining chamber. We have a prety bride & thay are I belive very will plesed with one another. . . . Emes the wine coper & Blaynes brother has bought Gidy hall [Lady Gawdy's own property]; they give 9,000 pound. My dear lady grevs that it should be sould to such mean parsons. . . . All our company is gon to se Helmingham, Sir Lionell Tallemachs hous. I stayed at home to right this. . . . My lady is gon with them. . . . The bride & bridgroom desirs your good wishes.'

Nothing could be more charming than the welcome Lady Gawdy gave the young couple, when, after their short honeymoon, 'M^r^ Gawdy brought the Lady Mary home.' Lady Hobart writes: 'Now I must let you know the gret fam of dear Lady Gadys entertanment; it is sayd to be as much beyond them all as can be expressed, and in that order, as if thar had bin nothing to be don in the hous, but to wat on the compny. All the contry sent hur in presants she had 4 bras of bucks and fish and fruts and all good things, and when they cam hom, thay war met with in thre mils of the hous, with 6 scor hors of the gentill men and youmen, and at Debnham all the wemin with garlands and flours, and strowed them hom to the hous, whar my Lady and hur compeny and sarvants wated on hur, and the musick folowed her.' Sept. 25, 1657

Two other marriages announced to Sir Ralph by Cousin Stafford interested him extremely. 'The Duke of Bucks is maried to Lord Fairfax his dau^r^; & the mariage of the Protector's dau^r^ to Warwick's sonne, is forthwith to bee solempnized.' 'My Lord Duke is with his bride,' writes Dr. Denton, '& my Lord Fairfax is come to town to mediate, I hear nothing yet of his reception.' The Earl and Countess of Warwick had become more and more influential in the Protector's Court; the Royalists said that he had made more money 'than any man who trafficked in that desperate commodity—rebellion.' Cromwell had a real affection for Warwick, and now the Sept. 30, 1657 Oct. 29, 1657

Nov. 11, 1657 marriage of his grandson Robert Rich and the Lady Frances Cromwell was celebrated with great magnificence and attended by many persons of quality. The country seemed to have settled down under Cromwell's rule ; even Henry and his grand friends wish to be reconciled with the powers that be. 'Kirke, My L^{d} Protector's Rider is dead,' writes Dr. Denton, '& H. V. would have succeeded, & tried my L^{d} Richard & Lord Claypole, but it seemes noebody shall succeed.'

Cousin Stafford sends a queer story to Sir Ralph in November. 'I heare Sir Arthur Haselrigg is fallen into a desperate nott, by defending a possession against the sherife and some troops of horse, which he did beate from a house and lande, which hee had recovered by law, and by a second verdict lost the same againe, and hee pursuing his opportunity upon the sheriff's recess for more aide, possessed himselfe of Newcastle upon Tyne, where in a hostile manner hee defends himselfe. This is Sir C. Packe's newes, which hee related something doubtfully ergo quer :' This letter was accompanied by 'a bundle of Sweet Briar plants and fine Figg setts,' for which Sir Ralph was to give him in return 'a dozen young wallnutt trees, as many Chesnuts & Almons, fowre young firs and a pyne.' Sir Ralph persevered with his improvements. Mulberry trees and red roses are being planted at Claydon ; and '300 Asparagus Plants' arrive from a nursery gardener with some 'Double violettes blue & white, 100 of goodlie July flowres, sweet Marjoram & Lemon Time, & some Althea Arborea essence.' There are orders for 'new stone seats, 6 feet 9 inches long and 17 inches broad, and stone stairs in the garden,' and 14 feet of coping-stones for a balcony; and the house is beginning to look so comfortable again, and so well furnished, that Edmund writes in the summer of 1657: 'Of household stuff—I beleeve few gentlemen have so good or such great store.' July 17, 1658 Lady Hobart sends down from London some gilt leather and a piece of 'Pintado'[1] for 5*s*. 6*d*. which she thinks cheap, with 'fringe for the Pentado bed' and some Dutch tiles. Dr. Denton, who is to receive some money for Sir Ralph, writes: 'The gooses feathers will quickly be pulled. therefore be sure you have a Pegasus ready bridled, sadled & plated, & your Jockey ready stript; to carry the enclosed the next day & receave L'argent, but not to bury in Brick & mortar.'

Sir Ralph's next project was to have a deer-park, and the negotiations begun with Lord Monson in the Fleet Prison for the purchase of deer stretched over several years. Doll Smith writes of some deer offered to her husband: 'From my Lord Gray's park Oct. 27, 1657 . . . but non but dows, & fawnes, and prickets[2] & prickets sisters . . . twenty shillins a peece for all thees, one with another, & that he must be tyed to take twenty brace of them for else they will not bestow the making of a cops to take them . . . if they be not honest they may send more fawnes than any other deare.' Cousin Smith, who is to divide them with Sir Ralph, says, 'Male Deere are my principle aymes.' Thomas Stafford writes about some 'of the wild beastes' he is getting Sir Ralph from Mr. Dodesworth, 'of Harrold Park, 4 or 5 miles beyond Owlney.'

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[1] An obsolete word, probably for a mottled stuff, whence the name Pintado for a guinea-fowl. Spanish *pintado*, from the verb *pintar*; Latin *pingere*.

[2] The buck is called a fawn the first year, a *prickett* the second (see *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 2).

June 2, 1657 After an infinite amount of negotiation Lord Monson is ready to accept an offer for his herd of deer at Grafton Park, Northamptonshire; Sir Ralph intends to buy them all, and then to divide them with Cousin Dick Winwood. Jan. 1, 1659 The latter writes: 'Because you desire to know what price I can be contented to give, I doe as in all cases of purchase, ground myselfe uppon the markett, which is twentie shillings for every Deere above a Fawne . . . the purchaser being att all the charges of taking and bringing away, & thirtie shillings a piece to have them delivered to me att Quainton. I shall expect the full indevor of the Keepers to holpe me in the taking of them, and to paie my money when I receave them.' But even this transaction could not be carried through without political complications. Sir Ralph heard 'that Homan of Paulers Perry might doe good service in taking the deere'; but 'because he had sworn as a witness against my Lord, he knew not whether my Lord would like him.' Lord Monson's agent gave permission to 'bring in whom we pleased.' Upon this Sir Ralph felt himself authorised to employ this person of heretical opinions to catch the deer. 'Deare Ralph,' wrote Dr. Denton, 'I rec^{d} yours of 23, 25 and 28 Feb. the enclosed from my Lord & cousin of Monson is worth all yours, I am commanded to send it you. He is in great wroath and vowes revenge, though not on you yett on your Agents; only he thinks you could not but know, that they that were imployed were his bitter enemies, & soe though not accused of misheefe yett of great indiscretion. Come off how you will, there's your charge Sir.' March 2, 1659

The deer themselves prove to be as delicate and as easily hurt as my Lord's feelings, and give occasion for many remonstrances and explanations on both sides. Two drown themselves in the park at Claydon, others sicken in the winter. 'It is an extraordinary trouble to me,' writes Holmes, the new steward, 'because my master delighted in them so much, I know not what to doe in the busnes but feed them, as well as may be.'

In the spring of 1660 'Cousin Winwood' is negotiating for Sir Ralph the purchase of 'my Lord Whitlocke's deere,' which has also to be discreetly managed, for 'if it bee knowne at Henley that the deere are sould, my Lord being now under a little cloud, they will endeavour to share with his Lordshipp, therefore the sooner & the privater the businesse bee doun the better.' The keeper is to provide 'the Toyles' and to assist in catching them; 'Winwood lends the Buckstalles. As for Waggons,' writes Sir Ralph, 'I shall provide them; if there is but (as you guesse) Feb. 11, 1660 about 20, one Waggon and one cart will easily bring them, for the Load is nothing, my own wagon is very long and large, and I remember you brought home 7 Brace at a time in yours.' Doctor Denton mocked at the deer and their leanness, and at all the trouble they gave; he preferred horses any day. 'To upbraid your ill skill in pinguifyinge venison,' he writes, 'I eat yesterday a very fatt pasty of a Haunch, at Sir Orlando Bridgeman's.' But the deer were much admired in the country and it was Pen's opinion that her brother would 'sartanly mak a Princely Pallice of Claydon before he had don.' Sir Ralph was also buying swans to put into what he called 'my great navagable river.'

The plots are on foot again in 1658; Dr. Denton writes: 'We had a most lusty search on tuesday night, and much securinge. There is J. Russell and Major Harlow both in the Tower. S^r^ W^m^ Waller hath been examined but dismissed on parole. I am like Ralph that winked and thought because he saw noebody that noebody saw him. I hope they have more feares and jealousies then there is cause for.' 'Will H. V. never have more conscience than to sell Jades not worth 20*l.* for 30*l.* I hope he will have the manners to give my colt at wilsons a visitt. I thinke any body may plate it and cuppe that will, for we are as secure now as full of feares a few daies agoe. The Swedish victory hath changed the whole scene. You may be pretty confident that a Parl^t is resolved on. . . . Tell Henry that I much rejoice at

March 25, 1658

March 31, 1658

the pleasant journey he had to Newmarkett and at the Indian returne he made for his adventure thither. . . . I will give him 5*l.* for old Chamberlayne to carry me to Ely in Easter weeke and at my returne he shall have her againe for 4*l.* 15*s.* Desborow is married to her mother, who married St. John's son.' April 8, 1658 'Be pleased to understand that the Lieutent of the Tower sent for S^{r} W^{m} Compton and Sir J^{o} Packinton [Sir Ralph's colleague for Aylesbury in the first days of the Long Parliament] who are now in the Tower where more are expected uppon the same Acc^{t} which the town say was only because they had given security heretofore at St. James's. I am very confident we shall be quiett this sum̃er, Maugre all the Dons of Spaine. Its said they are humble Petitioners for peace. I am venturing 50*l.* to Nova Scotia,' and William Gape adds that 'all thought of foreine invasion [has] blown over. . . . Molly doth not understand what mischiefe shee hath done you, but her name being up, her innocence will not excuse her, therefore shee wisheth shee had done somewhat, rather than be censured for nothing.'

William Smith, who had narrowly escaped in 1657, was arrested now. He writes to Sir Ralph from his own house: April 19, 1658 'Sir, on Wednesday here came souldiers with a warrant to search for and seize horses and arms and to apprehend me, I desired to see the warrant, which was under Sir George Fleetwood's hand. I was in Phisick but they would not lett me stay untill the next day, there were many in the warrant besides my selfe, but not you, but since I came home I hear that my Brother Alex. Denton should say they were att your house. Sir George Fleetwood came the next day to Allisbury, and told me he had a commission and instructions to imprison all that were of the late King's party. I am confined to Mr. Kilby's house, and Mr. Stafford is my bedfellow. Sir John Burlaiy, Mr. Tyrringham, and many others are confined to other places, and some are put in the Gaole. We have liberty of the gardens and orchards of the house, and may goe into the towne or fields with a souldier, which I doe not trouble. Sir George gave me leave to come home this day with a keeper with mee, but I am just now returning againe to my old Quarters; where I desire not to see you, and from whence when I shall be delivered or upon what termes I know not. God's will must bee donne, under which I am patient. If the souldiers have not been as yett att your house it is my opinion that you goe to London and stay there till this business is over.' April 22, 1658 'It is said that the High Court of Justice will suddenly sitt to try those who are thought to be guilty, and till then I believe the goates and sheepe must keepe Company together.' Sir Ralph upon receipt of this news sent to enquire after Sir Justinian Isham, who when Royalists were to be 'clapped up' was ever the first to suffer. April 27, 1658 'Sir, I write now only to know both how and where you are, and how you have beene, and are like to bee, for in these wretched times a man must bee alowed to bee a little inquisitive after his Freinde. For my part, I am yet at home, and soe I hope to bee unlesse some new and stricter orders ishew out. That very day the gentry were taken heere, I went to bury Sir Roger Burgoyne's Lady in Bedfordshire, little dreaminge of such a businesse. . . . I presume the heate is already over, for in these parts wee have had none taken of late, which makes me almost confident that this time shall bee escaped by Sir, yours etc., R. V.'

April 27, 1658

Sir Justinian replies : 'Sir, With divers other Gentlemen of these 4 Counties (under M^r^ [Major General] Butler) I am at present under guard at Northampton, nothing hath bin yet declared to us, nor Major Butler yet seene amongst us ; some particular men have laboured their freedom & hope to obtain it from above, but I cannot yet say who have it. It hath bin intimated to some that some declaration or acknowledgement is expected, but I heare no farther of it, & tis probable a great part may remaine here for some tyme, where most of us are visited with extreame colds and many taken with vomiting and purging. I am glad 'tis yet so wel with you, endeavor to keepe your selfe soe, none have bin brought hither since the first taking, and Sir L. Griffin hitherto excus'd by reason of his indisposition your old Lord Brudenel heere, Lord Camden, Lord Cullen intro multos alios.'

Cromwell himself was full of trouble. Four months after the wedding celebrated with so much joy, his daughter, Lady Frances, was left a widow, while still in her teens; and a few weeks after Lord Warwick had replied to the Protector's affectionate letter of condolence, he followed his grandson to the grave. The news reached Sir Ralph in one of Nancy April 2, 1658 Denton's childish scrawls. 'Sir I am forced to give you this trobill becas my father was sent for to my Lady Wharton's unexpectedly istardy . . . and my mother is sick a bed . . . truly I thinck that there was never so sickly tim this—mani years as it is now for truly all ouer house is sick, I think thar is not 5 that is well . . . all the newes I can wright you of is that my Lord of Worik is Ded & died on munday morning.' There is a hurried line from Dr. Denton at midnight, having just returned home: 'My Lady Wharton beinge dead, & soe is my Lord of Warwick, I can say no more, nor advise you what to doe, but to eat & sleepe in quiett. Stow is the fittest for Harry [Sir R. Temple being in favour with the Protector] Its thought many heads will fly, sound discoveries having been made.'

Lady Hobart urged Sir Ralph to come up to town, where he was wanted to swear to his father's handwriting, but it was the eve of the day he always kept holy, the anniversary of Mary's death. 'It is May 9, 1658 impossible for me to be there soe soone,' he wrote, 'for tomorrow I never stirre wherever I happen to bee.'

The Protector was at the height of his glory that summer of 1658; a new parliament was to be summoned, and the Royalist plotters were at last thoroughly discouraged. Henry reports the fate of some of them: 'The good D^{r}, & Sir Harry, are both executed & this day the high court doth sitt again to trey Woodcock and another knight, whose name I have forgott.' Though the Royalists mourned Dr. Hewitt as an 'excellent preacher' and 'holy man,' most people felt that he and Sir Henry Slingsby richly deserved their fate, and even they would probably have been spared but for a second plot which came to light while their trial was actually proceeding; of those concerned in it Dr. Denton writes: '2 were executed yesterday & 1 reprieved when rope was about his neck.' June 10, 1658 July 8, 1658

Henry also gives us the other side of the picture in the honour paid to Cromwell by foreign Powers. 'On tuesday last here arrived a parson of greate honor, whose name at present I have forgot [the Duc de Créqui] with a complement from the kinge of france to the Protector, & for the honor of our nation like to be nobley entertained by his Highness, for I dare say no imbassador whatsoever had soe greate an alowance as this courtier; 200*l.* a day for his table and other expenses, & logd at Brookhouse.' June 17, 1658

Henry keeps up his racehorses, and the Doctor is not averse to a little quiet gambling. 'Harry and I have had this day a smart bout at Tables for colt Peterborough & my dun mare that is at Stow; & he gott but 2 games of the 21. Soe I have won y^{e} mare though happily in y^{e} sense I may loose by the match. . . . 100000 (I can allow you July 14, 1658 cyphers enow) thanks for Chesnut it is best to send her on Satterday [to Stowe] least Sir Rich : should be gone to the Assizes on Munday. . . . If my coach horses be out of tune, Kate will scold me into an Augure hole. Mal & Will are for Cheshire [Madcap has volunteered to go with them and to take Claydon on her way home], Kate is for Surrey & Wm. D. must be left all alone.'

Before the family party broke up Kate was to have a dinner party, and there was a private joke between Sir Ralph and the Doctor about a savoury horse-pasty made at Claydon, the composition of which was to be kept a profound secret. 'Your precious clouted boxe, that brought the precious pye,' has duly come, but Dalton doubts that 'our London dames will be soe queazy stomackt as not to touch y^{e} colt, but I have kept my councill hitherto.' Two days later he reports : 'Cooke Laurence's owne privy kitchen had noe such dish as colt pye, but noebody knowes what they have eaten as yett, noe nor Harry, nor dare not tell because Lady Longavile was at the feast. . . . I pray remember to get some body to back the colt as soone as may be, for I am like to have noe other for my owne saddle this summer.' He has journeys in prospect to 'Pittsberry, Audley Inn, & perhaps to Cambridge.' The horses are reported to be in poor condition, and the Doctor writes in comical despair, addressing the letter to his horses and their host : 'For his noble ffrends Don Diego, Hipporio, Radulpho Claydono.' July 22, 1658

'Base, abominable, base newes indeed. I doubt my jades are growne as cunninge as theire Dame, I might say, as their D^{r}; loath very loath to goe from soe good quarters; that horses should goe 3 or 4 yeares togeather in coach & then jade it. It putts me beyond all patience, & soe confounds all my summer projects and progresses, that I am in a wood, & know not which way to turne my selfe. More horses I like not to buy, haveing enough already, & to have none Kate will not be pleased.'

Wickedness does not go for ever unrewarded. Doll Smith and her mother planned a dinner at Ratcliffe, at which there was much 'good company,' on purpose to give the Doctor 'a vengeance pasty' in return for 'colt pye.'

The New Disease is rife again in the autumn of 1658. 'Lady Fiennes cannot recover,' Dr. Denton writes; 'I have given her 2 vomitts but it profitts little. I shall have a wonderfull losse in her, sed fiat voluntas Dei.' The precious colt and 'his keeper' are also ill at Claydon. The Doctor finds his materia medica within the limits of the old court yard; the colt is ordered 'a groundsel purge,' and the man 'a stone crop vomitt' in repeated doses.

If the physician prescribed for horses, there was 'a Horse-Smithe' at Edmonton ready to do as much for 'human mortals.' Mr. Wakefield recounts apologetically, and not very clearly, how he had made use of him: 'I have had my two youngest Children, 4 Maydes & 2 men, downe at a tyme of this new Oct. 26, 1658

Disease, & yett through God's mercy are all recovered againe. (And now my other two men have gotten Agues) though I impute it under God, to a meanes that some people would have scrupled to have made use of his Phisicke; Hee being by profession a Horse-Smithe, and keepes a shoppe in our Towne. Butt hee having practised upon many others about us, before we made use of him, the successe his Phisicke hath had in our Family, hath much encreased his fame, and really I thinke nott without desart; for he gives you as rationall an Accompte for what hee doth, as any Phisitian that I ever yett mette withall. What I write is nott to derogate from the honour due to many Phisitians of quallity [pace Dr. Denton], but in the country, such cannott spend any tyme with us; and the trouble of sending soe farre too & againe, besides often tymes the mistakes and miscarriages of thinges, forces us to doe that which if we were in London, we should hardly venture upon.'

At Claydon Mrs. Westerholt kept various potent mixtures going, to be administered as the Doctor wrote her word. He refers admiringly to that 'purginge drinke as she made for the maids & the upholsterer,' and suggests that some burdock seeds or root might be added to it with advantage. The upholsterer, as he worked in the house, was admitted to share the household privileges. Did he abuse the housekeeper's kindness and help himself too greedily? We know not; we only hear that the upholsterer is like 'to make a dye of it,' but then, it is added, 'he was always a delicate man.'

In the great world outside Cromwell was busier than ever, the government of the country depended upon his personal initiative, and his powerful mind was full of schemes for reform at home, and fresh triumphs for the Protestant cause abroad. Then Lady Claypole, his daughter, fell ill, and the Protector watched by her sick-bed in an agony of sorrow. She died on the 6th of August; by the end of the month he was himself struck down. No alarm was felt at first, and Cromwell had an intense belief that he would recover. While the life-and-death struggle was going on in the sick-chamber, a terrific storm shook all the south of England, and the Royalists said that the Devil had come to fetch his own. On the anniversary of Dunbar and Worcester, praying for those that hated him, and longing, if it might be, to be yet 'farther serviceable to God and His people,' Oliver Cromwell passed away.

Sept. 3, 1658

The quiet chit-chat of the family letters continues with no allusion to this event of supreme importance. Sir Ralph is expected at Croweshall, and Doll Leeke watches for the coach: 'I am gron lean with walking to meat you, & freting as I came back . . . if I thought you cared for it, I could be angry.' Jack at school was spending that very September afternoon in painfully composing a Latin letter to his father, with no reference at all to the absorbing topic that was being discussed in the street outside. We

About Nov. 11, 1658 only hear later on from Lady Hobart: 'My Lord protector's body was Bered last night at one o'clock very privittly, & tis thought that will be [no] show at tall: the army dou bluster a letill: god send us pes for I dred a combuston.'

The expectation that there would be 'no show' was emphatically falsified; there was a public funeral, magnificent and costly beyond precedent. The coffin lay for more than six weeks 'in open state' in Somerset House, and there was a wax effigy of Cromwell standing robed in crimson (or, according to another account, in black) velvet, a sceptre in his Nov. 11, 1658 hand and a crown on his head. 'We are all a whist,[1] no newes stirring,' writes Sir Roger Burgoyne, 'but that the old Protector is now gott upon his leggs againe in Sumersett House, but when he shall be translated to the rest of the Gods at Westminster I cannot tell. Pray, doe you come and see.'

'It is supposed that the great funeral will be about All Saints,' writes another contemporary. 'Henry the Seventh's Chapel is being cleansed.' But though Cromwell died on the 3rd of September the funeral was not till the 23rd of November, the oppressive ceremonial being rendered still more hollow by persistent reports of a secret burial. Some believed that this had taken place immediately after death, others that the corpse had been hastily buried a week before the funeral upon an alarm that the discontented soldiers meant to seize it as security for their arrears. Evelyn watched the 'superb' procession pass with the 'imperial banners, atchiements, heralds . . . guards, soldiers, & innumerable mourners . . . but,' he adds, 'it was the joyfullest funerall I ever saw, for there were none that cried but dogs, which the soldiers hooted away with a barbarous noise, drinking, & taking tobacco in the streets as they went.'

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[1] The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kiss'd.
Milton, *Ode on the Nativity*.

Though Evelyn looked on with hostile eyes, it was doubtless true that the procession evoked no reverent sympathy from the crowd. The profound lull that had followed the shock of the Protector's death, was already giving way to intrigues and discontents. The French Ambassador, also an eyewitness, gives us a vivid picture of the close of this dismal pageant. The starting of the procession was long delayed by altercations in the Corps Diplomatique about precedence. The service was to have taken place by daylight; but this delay not having been foreseen, darkness fell upon the short November afternoon. 'There was not a single candle in Westminster Abbey,' M. de Bordeaux writes, 'to give light to the company, and conduct the hearse into a sort of "Chapelle Ardente," which had been prepared; there were consequently neither prayers, nor sermon, nor funeral oration, and after the trumpets had sounded for a short time, every one withdrew in no particular order.'[1]

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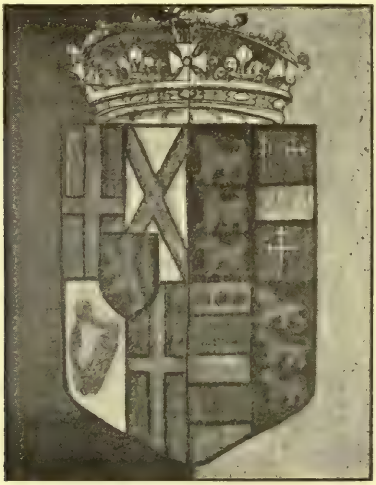
[1] Monsieur de Bordeaux to Mazarin (see Guizot's *Richard Cromwell*, i. p. 268).

In the gloom of that winter afternoon the Westminster boys were marshalled to witness the ceremony. Less than ten years before they had voluntarily gathered themselves together to pray for King Charles as he was led to the scaffold, and all the Puritan governors, and the Presbyterian and Independent preachers in the Abbey, had been unable to extinguish the chivalrous loyalty of Westminster School. The boys were now stirred to speechless indignation by the various emblems of sovereignty they saw displayed in Cromwell's honour, and Robert Uvedale, whose family had been conspicuous for services rendered to the fallen dynasty, sprang forward through the legs of the guard, snatched from the bier the little satin banner known as the Majesty

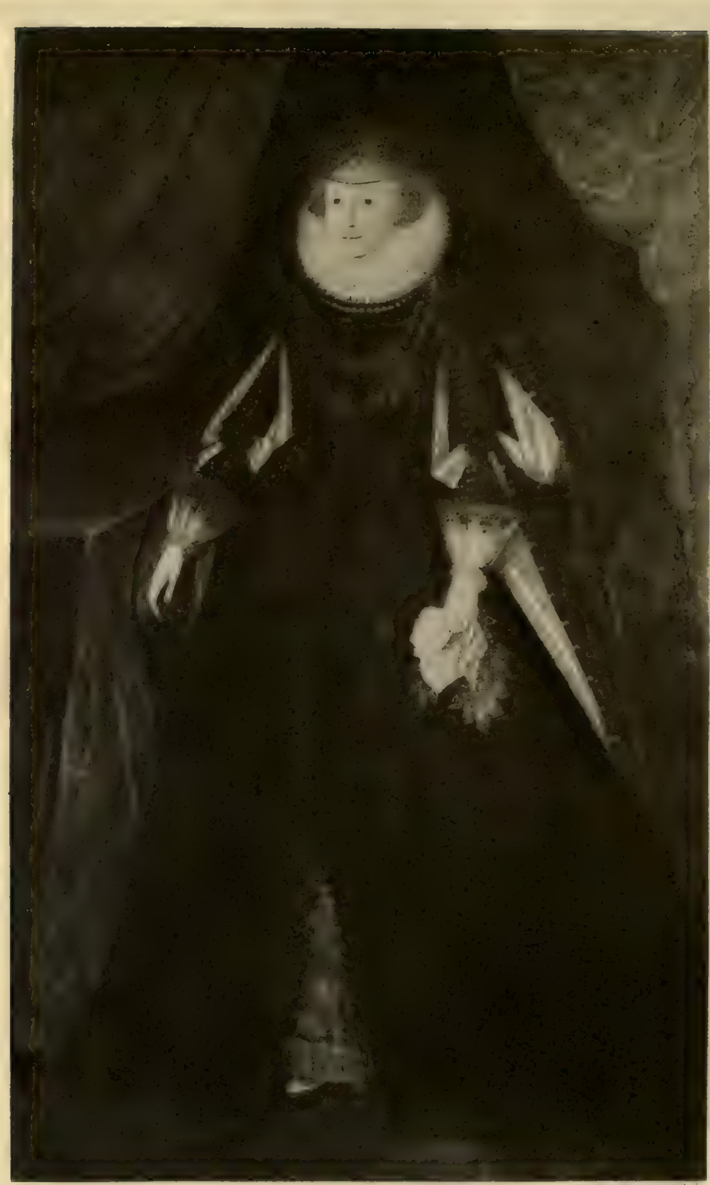


THE 'MAJESTY SCUTCHEON.'
Taken from Cromwell's bier.

Scutcheon, darted back again, and before anyone could recover from the shock of the surprise was lost in the crowd of his schoolfellows. It would have been highly inexpedient at such a moment to arrest and search the Westminster boys; so the bit of crumpled white satin remained in Robert Uvedale's pocket, to be proudly displayed in after years, and preserved as an heirloom in his family.

This curious little bit of wreckage that has drifted down to us from the storms of the seventeenth century has found a safe harbour in the dignified seclusion of the Bursar's Room at Lincoln College, Oxford. Its possessor, the Rev. Washbourne West, is the lineal descendant of Robert Uvedale, and the name of every member of the family in whose keeping the relic has been is known to him. It is owing to Mr. West's kindness that the story has been told here, and the Majesty Scutcheon reproduced. The boy himself, a great-nephew of Sir William Uvedale, Sir Edmund's old friend, went on to Trinity College, Cambridge, where in later years he was actually elected to a Fellowship in preference to Sir Isaac Newton. Behind the frame that enshrines the scutcheon is a long inscription, in Robert Uvedale's hand, beginning thus: 'Hoc Insigne raptum est a feretro tyranni Olivarii Cromwelli, cum effigies ejus cerea, regali cultu ornata, in ædibus Sancti Petri apud Westmonasterienses magnifice se ostentabat,' &c.

The 'quiet bones' of the poorest men and women who fell victims to the epidemic at Claydon were at least permitted ‘among familiar names to rest, and in the places of their youth’; but to the great man who had played so large a part in England’s history this common privilege of humanity was denied. The body laid in the Abbey vaults with such exaggerated pomp of ceremonial was ere long to be dug up again by the jackals of the Restoration, in order that every insult might be heaped upon it that petty malignity could devise.



Walker & Boutall Ph. Sc.

E Sussex

Eleanor, Lady Lee.
afterwards Counteſs of Suſsex.
Warwick & Manchester.
from a painting by Van Somer at Ditchley.

CHAPTER XII.

OF WOMEN'S MATTERS IN DISTRACTED TIMES.

1656–1659.

How small of all that human hearts endure
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure.—GOLDSMITH.

SIR RALPH'S sisters and lady friends were all, with one exception, Royalists; Constitutional Freedom was a cause for men to defend; Charles Stuart was a person for women to love and pity. The exception was of course Eleanor, Countess of Warwick; she had grasped from the first the importance of the issues, and had followed with enthusiasm every phase of the struggle. She was the recognised chaperone of the young Commonwealth whom other great ladies snubbed as a low-born and presuming creature. During the Protectorate she figured as almost our only Peeress, as well as being latterly step-mother-in-law to the Protector's daughter. But when, within a few months, Lord Warwick died, and Cromwell's family were so completely swept into oblivion as never again to influence English history, the widowed Countess was carried along by the tide, and Sir Ralph was soon called upon to arrange the settlements for her fourth marriage with the Earl of Manchester, who also wedded for the fourth time.

Edward Montagu, Earl of Manchester, had always been too lukewarm a partisan to satisfy Cromwell, and was shortly to welcome the incoming dynasty. Aunt Isham regrets that the Countess's mature charms and triple jointure were not bestowed on Sir Ralph himself, and writes, with a sly allusion to Mrs. Aris's wedding: 'I could wish that you was maried to the widdoe Warwick, ether a bed or up, so you had her anyhow.'

Sir Ralph and Mr. John Cary of Ditchley 'are careful to secure that Revenues, Rents, plate, jewels, goods & chattels belonging to the said Countesse,' shall 'continue to be in her sole & personal disposal.' Splendid dress and furniture were coming once more into fashion in the latter years of Oliver's rule. Lady Warwick has 'a faire knot of gold, enamelled with Tulipps set with Diamonds'; 'a greate round jewell of gold, set round with Rowes of diamond, & one great diamond in the middle'; 'Ropes of Pearle,' a fan-handle of emeralds and diamonds, another fan with rubies; 'a sweet bag embroidered with pearles,' and 'sixteen dozen of buttons enamelled with black with a diamond in every button'—probably the very ones shown in her portrait at Ditchley.

One set of her tapestry hangings represents the four seasons, another in eight pieces 'a designe of flower-potts,' and there is 'a fine suite of landscape hangings with pillars, of $155\frac{3}{4}$ Flemish ells,' in five pieces. For the withdrawing-rooms are two complete 'suites,' one of 'blue wrought velvet, fringed with blue'; another in 'Crimson figured satten, with silk fringe & gilt nailes, 4 Crimson wrought window Curtaines lined with Crimson China Satten, & 1 greate Crimson velvet Cabinett'; each suite has 'chaires, stooles & carpet to match.' The bedrooms are furnished with equal splendour. We hear of a 'Crimson figured satten Bed, trimmed with Imbroidered buttons and loopes, with Carpet, Chaires & stooles suteable'; '2 little China Carpets with coloured silkes & gold'; 'one scarlet cloth bed lined with Satten, a Counterpane of Satten trimmed with gold & silver ffringe & a rich gold & silver ffringe about the vallins'; another room is upholstered in 'Carnation quilted satin,' and a fourth in 'greene cloth, with Isabella & greene silk lace fringes, lined with Isabella taffety, and sheetes edged with purle.' Her widow's bed is of fine black embroidery, with 'a sheete wrought with black silke shaddowed,' with black chairs, stools, and carpet to match. We also hear of gilt leather, and of carpets from Turkey and Persia.

When we pass to any family less sumptuously lodged than that of the great Presbyterian Earl, the women are as little able to vie with Lady Warwick in upholstery as in political intelligence and influence. Busy wives and mothers knew little and cared less about the experiments in government the country was carrying on, but home duties never ceased to claim their heads and hearts. Children fell sick and must be nursed ; christenings, weddings, and funerals claimed their pious household rites, and rare indeed was the home in which the unsettled times had not brought a burden of painful retrenchment on its mistress. Law suits abounded, and quarrels engendered by the Civil War blazed up by the fireside as vehemently as those of Presbyterians, army officers, and Levellers in the world without.

John and Penelope Denton were still wrangling with his mother and his many creditors, and when he was not in Oxford gaol, 'Pen's bruit of a husband,' as 'Doctor' called him, was apt 'to lay her at his feet' ; 'It is not long since that upon a slit occasion, he did cik me about the house.' They came to Claydon, but could never persuade Sir Ralph to visit them, though Pen drank water to keep her ale for him, and took his constant denials very ill.

Peg Elmes's 'disordered spleene,' and the imperious temper that distinguished her and her husband alike, led them in 1657 to discuss the terms of a separation. Sir Thomas thinks that 'to part in Love . . . may increase it . . . donn in a way that nobody may know, certainly *guess* they will, but *know* they need not.' Peg's desire to detail her symptoms to every new doctor she heard of was a 'chargeable diversion,' and Sir Thomas's notions of a proper allowance were most niggardly. Peg wished to live with Cary, and her sister was ready to welcome her heartily, 'if we can agree upon tarmes of diet & other conveniences which shee must have. . . . Bot from an eldar brother's tabill & the command of a hous, & a coach & 4 horsis to an inconsiderabill younger brother, & a father of many children & a littell hous, it will be a great fall.' Margaret had fed so long on the 'stalled ox and hatred therewith' that she silenced Cary's scruples, but she herself proved a troublesome addition to the 'dinner of herbs' at Preshaw. To prepare for the trials of a small establishment she desires her brother to order 'a plain sillvor woch . . . as good a goeing one as I coulde, for I have it merely to know how the time goes away, & att Preshaw I am sertan, the nevor have ather clock or woch.' She is to pay 5s. a cwt. for the transport of her goods from London to Hampshire, and is sending them off, but being very unwell she lingers in the neighbourhood of physicians. Sir Ralph fears her 'too greate love to London' may be misconstrued 'by Norton . . . and if you Falter with your friendes at Preshaw, perhapps theire mindes may alter too, and then I know not where you will finde soe fit, soe good and soe honorable a retiring place. By this time I know you are more then a little angry.'

August, 1658

Sir Ralph was not mistaken. Peg's displeasure fills two folio sheets: 'I may justly make yous of the owlde fraise & say you tooke me up be foare I was downe . . . sertenly brother you cannot thincke as I stay heare now out of love to the plaise, when theare is hardly a cretur in it that I know, but if theare ware, I hope I have nevor caryed myselfe soe . . . but that

I may stay in any plaise . . . as I take the being parted from my husband as no wayes to my honer soe I take it for noe sich great dishoner as to be tied to live in obscurity all my dayes.' Sir Ralph calls her 'as captious a sister as she has been a wife,' and bids her 'steere what corse you please, you have now made it very indifferent to your Brother Verney.' Peg retorts, but at this point Cary and the Doctor insist that there shall be peace: 'Your Dr & you must not thinke to tell every body of theire faults and goe untold yourselves,' he writes, 'you, if theire father had been alive, durst not use your sisters soe slightly & pick quarrels . . . for feare they should be a burden to you. . . . I know noe reason why we should be out of the common lot of all men. Christe himselfe had his share herein, he was a Samaritan & had a Divell, & why should we speed better than our Master?'

Sept. 23, 1658

Sir Ralph once more took the Doctor's reproof in good part, and soon busied himself again in Margaret's interest. Before the fretful invalid settles at Preshaw, we may glance back at the family story of the Stewkeleys during the two preceding years.

There had been a sad outbreak of small-pox there in 1656; Cary had sent a note to a neighbour's house not knowing they had it, and the coachman brought back the infection. All the children and step-children sickened 'of this disease, as loathsome as dangerous'—'we ware all one among another, bot what fled.' The little ones should have been sent out of the house, but Cary's maid was away on a holiday, and 'infints are not essely disposed on.' Cary 'never went to bed in seven nights together besides many halfe nights'; she kept up while the children were in danger and then broke down utterly, whether 'from long woching,' as the Doctor said, or from 'a sorfet of eating pigg,' as she herself surmised, Mr. Stewkeley could not decide. He had in vain preached prudence, and could only hope 'that the seasonable advertisement of a brother may make deeper Impressions then of a Husband in doing—of what many of us need noe remembrancer—to love ourselves. . . . As she lives in her children more then in herself, so I wish the result of her maternall care would center in the preservation of herself.' Peg Gardiner narrowly escaped total blindness and was 'much worne out,' she 'is to keep on a mask & searcloths this winter.' Ursula, who refused to do the same, is deeply pitted.

Cary hopes to be free from infection by Christmas —'set the norsary aside, ther is no danger, I have ared all plasis so well.' But prudence was thrown to the winds and the house filled with guests on the happy occasion of the wedding of a step-daughter in November. 'Joy is coming into our house againe, for this day Page & Jane is marryed, & I wish more may follow . . . I am going to gine in Merth with the rest of our Company.' Ursula, with her deeply scarred face, and Peg with her mask and searcloth, were not very eligible bridesmaids. Cary's wish that Nov. 27, 1656 'more may follow' is explained by Ursula's conduct, who questioned her step-mother's authority on other points besides the care of her health and complexion. June 7, 1657 A daughter, Penelope, was born the next summer, Cary's third child by John Stewkeley.

In the spring of 1658 Cary is preparing for the wedding of another step-daughter, Anne, three years older than Ursula, and much more amiable. The snow is still deep in Hampshire in February and Feb. 17, 1658 has lain long. 'The flock hath eat nothing but straw this 6 weekes, nethar can ther sarvant help it for hay he had none, and if hee byes it hee must pay 4 pound a tonn and tis feared it will destroy the flock, bot look on the least harme it can doe them and ther woll must fall short, and bee an ill case to be sold off at mickellmas—nethar can they plow for barley.' She is nevertheless full of her hospitable preparations: 'For now I can acquant you that nancy is to be marryed to one Mr. Grove a wellshe gentelman of near 3 hondred a yeare in present possestion, he is young and hancome and, I think, very desarving every way, her banns are once asked, bot shee is not to be marryed till thursday senet aftar yesterday, and your company is so ernestly desiared that wee resolve to give you this timely notis. You will meat heare S^r John Cotton and his lady with some relations of his, bot tis only near kindred so wee acount it privat. Pray let not the smallnesse of our house disharten you, for I shall only troble you in haveing your sonn loay with you, which I hope you will bare with, in a great bed.' Sir Ralph hopes to come: 'But why do you Tantalize the poore young creature & make her keepe soe strict a Lent. I love not Fish & were she of my diet & humour (or perhaps of yours) ceatainly she might well account it a very greate severity.' Cary's household complications increase; she has extended her hospitality to Betty, though 'trobled with the specktikill of a discontented Sister'; Mr. Stewkeley's elder brother pays them long visits and must be humoured, lest he leave his money elsewhere; Daughter Grove has returned in a state when 'she is not to be crossed in anything'—and now Peg Elmes is expected. Feb. 19, 1658

Betty is wild to go off to London—'Hid Parck and the cheries ther is veri plesant to me.' Cary is always pleading for her with Sir Ralph—'I cannot bot pety her when I consider the world hath frouned uppon her, in that she cannot regain her own, though tis A calamyty thousands have soffared with her . . . her misfortune was not to be bred under parents, so she was spoyled in her education by sarvants . . . we must bare with her the more.' 'Truly Sister,' Sir Ralph replies, 'if you yourselfe were of such a humour, that you should sit wishing for death & sigh & sobb & pout yourselfe into a sicknesse, could you then with any confidence expect a more then common comiseration? . . . I must confesse your proportion of good nature doth very farre exceed my owne, for had I a sister in my house (nay a Wife) that would have beene noe better pleased, my stock of kindnesse & patience would have been soe wholly spent, that shee could not have been neare soe long suffered to inhabit there with me.'

When Peg was ill at Preshaw, 'Sis Betty,' to do her justice, 'did as much as any sarvant for her.' Oct. 22, 1658 Peg had been 'even to death's dore, to coldness & stiffness these 20 daies'; her husband was 'in great hopes of her death,' and Aunt Isham considered that 'she would be Little Lamented, the more is hir misery.' But Death himself was in no hurry to possess Peg Elmes, and she managed to get back to town leaving her kind hosts much dissatisfied with the 20*l.* she had left to defray the heavy expenses of Jan. 4, 1659 her long illness. 'Truly I thought Pegg would a delt hansomber with me,' Cary writes, 'bot I will try my wits to make the best of it to my husband . . . as we came together in love so wee will part; bot I dare boldly say shee will not be so obsarved in any Jan. 11, 1659 family againe in hast nor so waighted on.' 'Peg thinks she can live cheaper in London then hear . . . bot I have cast it up—£80 a year it will cost her, besids wine & breckfasting & washing & candle & bear; & for the coach £5 a yeare, & hear she had two sarvants & thar will have bot one, & for fuell you may ges the diferanc. . . . The D^{r} heare thinks, bot shee is angry to heare him . . . if shee taks not much physick shee will be the better . . . all this is tresone.' 'I am shur a door did not shot hard in my hous bot it disordered her, though now it semes the noys of musick & so much company can be indured ; & heare she did punctually take something every 2 howars or elc shee was faint. If Jornes can make one gaine so much stringth . . . I think it ware a good way for me to torn travelar : bot I thang God for the remove for I feind much ease to my mind & to my body sinc she went away.' 'Tis well Pegg could stay so long out of her chamber,' Cary writes again, 'hear was not a window cortains undrane & shee sat in a clos wickkar char, with a rogg rapt all about her, & a choshen under her feet besids.' 'Doctors' Fines will be her constant chamber followars. Truly D^r^ Are & D^r^ Care is my chef physistions, though I am fain to have a more chargabill D^r^ many times, bot ther is one D^r^ Verney, would due as great a cuare on mee as the othar three.' Feb. 14, 1659 April 19, 1659

Of Sir Ralph's remaining sister, Mary Lloyd, there are few memorials during these years, except her piteous begging letters—'I have not a gowne that will hange on my Bake, it is so olde that as I mende it in one place, it teares out in a nother, so that I am clothed with rages . . . & all most nacked.' Robert Lloyd seems to have settled in Wales 'for there all things are cheaper.' Their son Humphrey was born in June 1657 ; in 1659 Dr. Denton and Mr. Gape are 'mediating with Sir Ralph,' to grant his sister a cow ; and Mary writes—'Pray dericthe your letters for to be lefte att Mrs. Magdalen Lloyd's shoope in Wrixham for mee.'

Sir Ralph had set his heart upon a family gathering in the autumn of 1659. It was six years since Cary Gardiner had been at Claydon; it was difficult for her to travel either with or without her large party, but she will come 'if general trobles befall us not.' Sir Ralph urges Aunt Sherard to join them: 'Tis but a stepp to Claydon & my Coach shall attend your daughters and my Cozen Fust, when & where you please to command it, & for theire sakes I shall double my endeavour to save my Horses from the soldiers who at this hower doe swarme at Brickill, Stratford, Alisbury, & in some little villages neare me, & I heare are unruly enough in all places, but these only pass towards Cheshire, and make no stay in these parts, therfore you need not feare them. The first week in September (if Times are quiet) my Sister Gardner brings Preshaw heather; Sister Elmes Sister Denton and Brother Harry meet her heere; in the interim Sister Elmes visits Ratcliffe, and Harry, Stowe, because tis a more confiding Place then Claydon. Doubt not want of Lodging for we Virgins are resolved to Ligg[1] alltogeather. On Mounday there was about a Thousand Foot marched through my grounds about halfe a mile off, & on Tuesday some 5 hundred horse & Dragoons with theire Ordnance & 9 wagons of Ammunition & I was soe very a cloune as not to invite them to my house: but to

Aug. 10, 1659

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[1] Ligg, to lie down:

And they were bidden for to slepe
Liggende upon the bed aloft.
GOWER, *Halliwell's Dict.*

bee more searious, God be thanked I did not suffer by them. I am informed that greater numbers of horse & foot then wee have yet seene are to passe very suddenly; all immaginable haste is made to reduce Chesheire, soe that I hope they will finde no leasure to bee injurious to me.' John Stewkeley returns thanks, from 'Pickadilly,' for the invitation. 'The late noysis of riesings puts mee in a fear,' Cary writes later, 'that I have no fortune to see Claydon, the plas I do much long to be at; for if distorbances incres I would not be so uncevell to trobell your house, knowing strangers are unseasonabill at souch tims.' Aug. 16, 1659

Sister Betty came with the Gardiners, Mun and Jack were at home, and so complete was the gathering that there is not a single family letter written to Sir Ralph during that month of September. It certainly required some courage on his part to receive his four sisters; they usually discovered in their old home some piece of furniture or linen which they claimed as a right under their mother's will, or begged as a favour. This time Pen and Peg took a fancy to the same chair, and called each other hard names about it; Pen considered that Peg's self-will 'hath grone up with her from her cradell; all together she cannot make her great brags, her one will, hether two, hath maide her unfortinate. . . . I must follow Sister Gardiner's good humer and forget her ill humer to us both.'

Cary writes to her brother, on the way home, Oct. 21, 1659 'At the bare' at Reading: 'In souch paper as the Inne affords me, I cannot but let you know wee are safely arived at Reding before sunset, and your horsis have performed ther jorney very well. I acknowledg the gretest of thanks is due to you though I cannot expres it to you. I know by this time you have the hapy chang of your quiet which you could not have in souch a rout. My sarves to all your good company and till them I would have them pounc the pety-coat still and charg Hary to frighten Ante Isham with his ugly faces elc I shall take it ill.'

Penelope and her husband stayed two months at Claydon, and John Stewkeley thus describes their return journey: Nov. 3, 1659 'The Squier had a sad martch to London: hee had a great contest with Pen for a place in the coach, but Scartlett was preferd before him: hee rode as near the coach as if his horse had been tied to it, and was wett to the skin before hee came half way.'

We can see Sir Ralph's carriages and the party of riders clattering into the market-palce at Aylesbury, all splashed and dripping after fourteen miles of heavy November roads; we hear the hard words and hard blows exchanged as the passengers struggle for places in the public coach; while the Claydon servants, the post-boys and ostlers are grinning to see Squire Denton foiled in his efforts to push away his wife in order to secure an inside seat for himself.

Peg Elmes describes the 'great disorder' the 'Squier' was put into, 'for he was turned a horseback in all the wett . . . soe he had noe good luck after all his long feasting.'

No wonder that his ill-humour lasted beyond the journey; 'his black eye,' writes Brother Stewkeley, 'hath made him very nice of admitting any to see him since hee came up; hee is scarce in charity yet with his playfellows, but time will doe it.'

Anne Hobart, staying with Daughter Smith at Ratcliffe, and looking back upon Claydon hospitalities, writes to Sir Ralph: 'I pety you from my hart, that you have so much compeny, but when I conseder how near and dear they ar all to you—it tis a recreaton, espeshally when it coms but sildom.'

Betty Verney returned with the Stewkeleys to Preshaw where she relapsed into sad fits of grumbling; but it is impossible not to sympathise with the poor orphan girl, who had missed all the petting and spoiling that were her due as the youngest of a large family, or to wonder that she envied Ursula Stewkeley, whose caprice and wilfulness were viewed at home with an indulgence that Betty had never known. 'She holds her peace,' we are told, after a good scolding from Cary, 'only repeats often, how happy Ury is to have a father and uncill which dus all they can to help her to live in pleshur.'

CHAPTER XIII.

'TURNING WHEELS OF VICISSITUDE.'

O! what a hurly-burly is there made.
HENRY CROMWELL.

1658–1660.

OLIVER CROMWELL is dead and gone, but his Highness Richard, the Lord Protector, rules in his stead. There is a pause of silence and expectation. For a moment it seems as if the good ship of State would hold steadily on her course, even though the strong hand has relaxed its grip of the helm, and left her amidst gathering clouds to a feeble and inexperienced pilot. Dryden, in his heroic stanzas to Oliver's memory, could write with general acceptance—

No civil broils have since his death arose,
  But faction now by habit does obey;
And wars have that respect for his repose
  As winds for halcyons when they breed at sea.

But there are mutterings of the coming storm when Dr. Denton reports, in October 1658: 'The souldiers are not so quiett as I could wish, they would fayne a generall distinct from the Protector.'

In marked contrast to the preceding years, the

Verney letters are full of references to the state of the country during Richard Cromwell's protectorate, and the confusion that followed it, public anxieties once more taking precedence of private interests. Sir Ralph was eagerly watching every move on the board, but he was not too busy to write a charming letter to the ladies at Croweshall when Doll was planning a visit to town. 'Deare Cozen, I would not interrupt your London pleasures at your very first coming . . . but Cozen is it possible you should take a journey of 4 score miles in this season, through such wayes & Waters, to visit London, & then stay but 8 or 10 dayes there ? it cannot bee, for though almost all the World is changed yet you are still the same D: L: that dwelt at Claydon, & cañot bee guilty of such a crime soe highly prejuditiall to all your Friendes, kindred, & acquaintance, & soe absolutly contrary to your owne knowne Humour, & affections too; this were to forget your owne People, & your Fathers house indeed, if you lie under such a vow, tis better broke then kept. I must confesse when my Lady Gaudy is at Croweshall, the seate is good & pleasant, & that old House (in my conceit) excells the Louvre, & Escuriall; were her Ladishipp here, this House would doe soe too: her presence is able to consecrate all places where she comes ; but I presume she is still at Hewzon, with her beloved sonne & daughter, delighting herselfe in her new acquired Title of a Grandmother, therefore I doubt not but on second Nov. 15, 1658 thoughts you will resolve to keepe your Christmas with my cozen your sister, & thereby allow both time & oppertunities to bee attended often by Deare Cozen Yours etc.'

Dec. 2, 1658 'I hope well of peace,' the Doctor writes, 'the next parl^{t} will tell you more which is now the discourse of the towne againe.'

Mr. Butterfield, catching something of the general excitement, is taking voters to the election at Buckingham in January 1659. 'I intend with God's leave if the wether be such as I may safely venture abroade, to see the Knights chosen on Wednesday, & to take such as I can get to goe along with mee; most on this side will be for those two gent: but here is talke as though the Anabaptist party were like to carry it on the other side.' Sir Richard Temple was elected for Buckingham with Francis Ingoldsby, Esquire. Sir Roger Burgoyne did not stand, and his seat for Warwick was filled by Fulke Lucy of Charlecote. Odd little bits of gossip have survived. Feb. 21, 1659 'Sir H. Wroath in a drunken fit (as I doubt),' writes the Doctor, 'affronted Packer [M.P. for Wallingford] on the high way soe highly that he complained to the house of it, he is sent for as a delinquent.'

Cromwell, anticipating the reforms of our own day, had made some progress with a redistribution of seats in proportion to the changes of population. A reaction followed his death, and Dr. Denton rejoices

March 2, 1659

that old Malton, where the influence of the Eures lay, 'after much labour and sweat . . . hath a Joynt interest of electing Burgesses for Parl^{t} with new Malton, & soe the report is to be made to the house.'

Feb. 17, 1659

Feb. 21, 1659

'Dick's Parliament,' as it was called, met on January 27, 1659. Doctor Denton writes: 'I can tell you noe newes but that I graced the Parl^{t} House by makinge a simple speech in it.' In answer to Sir Ralph's expressions of surprise and curiosity he writes again: 'Soft Sir soft. It is not for Plebeians to know why we made our learned speech in the House. But because you tell me of such good newes of your favorite, I will tell you. At the Com^{tee} of Prividledges sittinge in the House, Mr. Howard having noe Councill there & being at a losse, I was fayne under the pretence of my neeces Interest to say some pretty simple things which was enough for Mons^{r} le Medecin to quack withall. However it was as wise as my L^{d} Barkstead, who uppon a sum̃ons from the com^{tee} of Greeviances for a false imprisonment came to the barre (they sittinge in the House) the bar beinge down, with his hatt off, & there was treated by the name of M^{r} Barkstead with out welt or guard, & made soe pittifull a defence that they have voted the prisoner (whose name I know not) free, the imprisonment illegal, & will take farther time to consider of reparacõns & you are welcome. Gent. Coll: Tyrrell was in the chair.'

This incident caused much uneasiness to the Protector's party; while Oliver lived his arbitrary acts were submitted to as necessary to the public safety. John Portman, formerly Blake's secretary, was imprisoned, on Cromwell's own warrant, as a Fifth Monarchy man about to take up arms. Barkstead, the Lieutenant of the Tower, a brave soldier who dreaded nothing except having to make a speech, had deferred as long as he dared appearing at the bar of the House.[1] The warrant was pronounced to be illegal, and the prisoner ordered to be discharged, and thus a blow was struck at the existing government by the Republicans, under pretence of redressing a former wrong. Sir Ralph writes in April 1659 to Monsieur Poppin, who played chess with him at Blois: 'I would now very willingly informe you of the state of our affaires heere, which are as bad as bad may be; but all letters are now opened, & such as speake of newes are stopt, therefore at the present it must needes bee forborne by me.' 'I cannot but pray & hope for peace,' sighs good Mr. Butterfield, 'though I doe not like the present aspect of things, especially as they are represented to us in the country.'

On the 22nd of April Richard Cromwell, yielding to the dictation of the council of officers at Wallingford House, dissolved the Parliament that had met in January. But the difficulty of raising money forced the soldiers to have recourse to another, and on the 7th of May, to avoid fresh elections, the fragments of the

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[1] Guizot, *Richard Cromwell*, i. p. 89.

Long Parliament were pieced together and set up again at Westminster, under their old Speaker, Lenthall. In the meantime all authority was passing out of Richard Cromwell's hands. 'The Rump' announced that they were to 'endeavour the settlement' of the Commonwealth 'without a Single Person or House of Peers'; but for eighteen days longer he still lingered on at Whitehall. On the 25th of May, however, his Highness the Lord Protector sent in his abdication, which the House instantly accepted without demur, and 'Mr. Richard,' shorn of all his titles, was requested to retire from Whitehall and 'to dispose of himself as his private occasions shall require.' So easy it is to fall!

Honest, kind-hearted, and conscientious, but hopelessly discredited as a ruler, this 'mute, inglorious' 'Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood,' retired into complete obscurity, endowed with 'a comfortable and honourable subsistence,' and with the people's nickname of 'Tumble-down Dick.'

And now the hurly-burly began in earnest. The 'Single Person' had disappeared, and the Rump and the officers were left to fight out the old question of the independence from civil control claimed by the army: 'The Saints,' shouting for 'the good Old Cause,' wanted a pure democracy, while the Royalists were preparing in several counties to proclaim 'King Charles.'

'Lord Harry is sneaking,' writes the Doctor in June, with scant respect for the best of Cromwell's sons, 'and hopeing they will give him an Hon^{ble} livelyhood, & its hoped not.'

> Where's now the impostor Cromwell gone ?
> Where's now that falling star, his son ?

Cowley's questions would not have been premature in the summer of 1659, so utterly had the dynasty been swept away. The bills were not yet paid for Oliver's State funeral, and the country could hardly throw them upon 'Mr. Richard' now, however unpopular this payment had become, and matters were no further advanced by the order given by the Council of State for 'the demolition of the chapel in which the late Protector's effigy was exposed.'[1] The House of Commons had to be appealed to, and Lady Hobart writes in July of an Act 'to mack all pay for the morning my Lord protector gave.' There are 'rumours of many troubles but noe certainty of any.'

Penelope is chiefly anxious about Henry's safety. July 19, 1659 Dr. Denton had told her that 'there is a Banning coming out against such Rabble Rout as he is.' 'I pray god mak me so happy as that this Act against delinquents cannot touch my Brother.' The Doctor advises that Henry should send in the list of his horses at Stowe, 'for it cannot be safe for him to shuffle it off,' and he has sent in a list of his own. July 28, 1659 He writes to Sir Ralph: 'I hope this will find you safe and sound returned maugre all rumors, feares & jealousies, which continue high here, still, & want for noe multiplicacõn caused by addition of Cyphers only, & not one reall significant truth that I know of. Offensive . . . Persons, Armes, & horses are secured in divers counties.'

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[1] M. de Bordeaux to M. de Brienne, June $\frac{6}{16}$, 1659 (Guizot, *Richard Cromwell*).

Public anxiety is growing, a terror of a new civil war seizes upon quiet people ; but the troops of the Parliament are successful. Massey, who is leading the Royalists in Worcestershire, is defeated and taken prisoner. Dr. Denton relates the accident by which he subsequently made his escape while riding in front of the trooper who guarded him: 'The horse stumblinge threw them both, by which meanes he escaped into the wood, & is not yet found that I heare of.' There is a warrant in August requiring Sir Ralph to send a horse to the 'George at Aylesbury,' or 10*l.* to excuse 'horse & armes.'[1] August 4, 1659

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[1] 'A coppy of the noate of the names of my Family and of the Armes delivered to Roger Deeley the Constable this Day. Aug. 15, 1659

S^{r} Raphe Verney.
his sonne M^{r} Edmund Verney.
Rob^{t} Kibble
John Heron } their 2 men.
John Fowles, the Butler.
Michaell Durant, the Cooke.
Will: Farmer, the Groome.
Tho: Hargate
Tho: Dod } Gardiners.
James Hetheridge, an Upholsterer at worke by the day.
Martin Dye
Tho: Leaper
Will: Scott } foot boyes.
M^{rs} Joane Westerholt, the House keeper.
Jane Bates
Katherine Hazle } Servant maides.
One Birding Peece of M^{r} Edm: Verneys and foure Swords.'

The Doctor's next letter to Sir Ralph is written after the Parliament had despatched Lambert to crush the formidable insurrection in Cheshire under Sir George Booth, and the greatest anxiety was felt in London as to the result. 'I hope you will be soe wise as to put the horses in the woods. I pray let your Favoritt's shooes be pulled off that she may goe for a colt. We all wished ourselves with you last night; this place was never so neare aflame, bussell, confusion which you will, as last night by the Judgm^t^ of all, & what will be the Issue a few more houres I ghesse will declare. We have all a mind to be out of the towne, but yett hopes feares, & jealousies doe soe distract us, as that we can resolve of nothing. I wish my papers & other things were with you, for we doe not thinke ourselves at all secure here. . . . The face of things may alter in a mom^t^, the battle not beinge alwaies to the strong nor the race to the swift etc; but the open face of things at this present appeares thus, viz. noe considerable force, if any at all, up anywhere but with S^r^ G. Booth, who with others are now proclaimed traitors, & ag^st^ whom there is gone a strong force. Desborough gone into the West to keepe all quiett there, with power to arm all 5^th^ monarchy men & the like; new militias raisinge in every county: The only thinge that lookes like countenancinge Sir George, is the intended peticōn of the city for a free parl^t^ as they say. This finds soe great opposicōns that for my part I thinke it can come to nothinge. I doe not heare of any one Cavalier

Aug. 10, 1659

in all this affaire, but that it is wholly on the presbytery, & those that fought & engaged for what they call the good old cause: the result out of the premisses is this, that if warrs continue the debt must encrease: taxes, free quarter, militia horses, besides the casualty of plunder must & will dock the revenew, & interest as bad as all these will eat like militia horses whilst you sleepe.'

Sir Ralph is full of gloomy forebodings; by reason of these new troubles he is obliged to suspend payment of interest to some of his creditors. 'I never yet fayled paying within the time, but if warres come God knows what we shall all suffer.'

'Yours of 7th instant,' writes Dr. Denton, 'like phisick of various virtues, wrought severall effects on me both to laugh & stampe. I have beene with your blade, your Bilboa Blade, who would faine have made me beleeve that the ☽ was made of green cheese.' Aug. 10, 1659

When the first rumours of Lambert's victory reach London Dr. Denton writes: 'As for Cheshire busines you must have a lusty faith & beleeve Lyes, contradictions, nay impossibilities, as that the castle is surrendered quietly, & yett taken by storme & every man put to the sword; that Charles Stuart is kept prisoner by ffrance & Spaine, & yett landed here; that Mountague [the Admiral of the Fleet] kist his hand to daies since, & yett he & his navy will live & dy with the parl^{t}; that Booth & Lambert are in treaty, & yett Lambert refuses to treat at all, & other stuff then this I can send you, & Aug. 20, 1659 this I take it is enough to torture your beleife.' Aug. 24, 1659 'Kate was lustily promised to Rat: but now her heart misgives, & she finds many excuses; the waters, coldnes of the weather, son Gape far from her when I goe to the fenns, & much more such trash; but the truth is her poore hart is sett on Claydon & takes Calfe Ralphe to be the best Nurse & Provider in County Bucks.'

Doll Leeke writes at the same time from Suffolk: 'The day was set for both the M^r Gaudyes waiting upon you, but the troublesome times has hindered them, for it is daingerous in this county for one gentelman to visit another, & it is posible it might have binn as predidishall to you; they might have found you or put you in the same condisson as you were whan they wear last at your hous. The Asosiation is very quiet: the parliment have rased a great many hors: my lady & hir sonn has & must send out 3, too are gon. We have had a trope near to search the hous which we took unkindly for we thought we had behaved ourselfes so as not to be suspected. Senc the presbeterians fight against the parliment I will think all things posible for I beleved them inseperable.'

The question in everybody's mind was what part General Monk would take, and when it was known that he was likely to support the Rump, Lambert and the officers at Wallingford House forcibly Oct. 13, 1659 dissolved Parliament, for the second time, and constituted themselves the sole authority.

Doctor Denton writes to his nephew, having received, as he says, 'a Loyne of Caufe Raph. We hope to eat it merrily for your sake. Maugre all alarms & tumults: We are in the posture you left us: the City doth nothinge effective. Fleetwood hath gott the Tower by a trick, & Southampton hath taken itselfe, for whilst the garrison went out to trayne they shutte the gates & soe keepe them out.' Dec. 14, 1659

The next day a new Constitution was proclaimed by the council of officers, and Parliament was to meet in February. Sir Roger writes: 'The com̃on councell satt yeisterday from 10 in the morning till 6 at night, and the result of all was not very acceptable to the generallity of the Citty; they have not yet according to the petitions settled a militia of their own. What a few daies more may produce God only knowes: God fitt us for the worst of times.' Dec. 15, 1659 'Several horses have been taken & when to be restored I am to learn. Lambert is reported to be at Newcastle and his men reduced to some straits, being not supplied according to expectation with shooes & stockins, for if report be true a friggott that was bound for Newcastle with that kind of ware & arms, most unhappily mistook the port & sett in to Leith in Scotland, so that Monk's army have mett with them. Monk they say is at Barwick, a good distance from the other, yet its said that Major Creed had an encounter with a party of Monk's & had not the better of it. Sir H. Vane is return'd and Salloway; severall of Rump, with Lawson [the Admiral of the Dec. 20, 1659

Fleet in the Thames] who for the present declares for a Parl^{t}; I suppose the Rump, though some doubt it. Sir Arthur Hasilrig & Morley are still at Portsmouth.'

Dec. 21, 1659

Sir Roger writes twice the next day 'by carrier as well as by Coach,' and tells Sir Ralph of the perplexity and indecision in the City, where the Lord Mayor and Common Council had taken independent action. 'Lawson sent a letter to the Common Council that ther might be endeavoured a good understanding between the Parl^{t} Army & Citty, which must needs be the Rump. But they regarded it very little, and sayd they would consider of it another time, for now they were upon other business of concernment, & had but a very short time allowed for it, yesterday being the last day of their sitting . . . they could not conclude as to the Militia though their thoughts were much uppon it, but have declared for a free Parliament. . . . A Common Councill was chose this day & such a one as hath not these many yeares been known for Malignancy.'

Dr. Denton hears that 'Wallingford House voted last night that Rumpe should sitt againe.' 'Here is great noise of a plott discovered which to us ignorant souls seems little: we are yet quiett & for ought I see like soe to be. Vane & Salloway are returned from Lawson & have obtained a treaty with him and Scott, & two others of each side.'

Sir Nathaniel Hobart's work in the Court of Chancery was upset by the unsettled conditions of the time; he had been ill of a pleurisy in the spring, to the great alarm of his family. 'I infinitely long to heare of honest Natticock,' wrote Sir Ralph to Doll, '& to bee assured of his recovery, for a better friend & a better Man is not knoun̄e to me.' Thanks to the Doctor's care he recovered, and Mun wrote to Lady Hobart: 'It is my earnest prayer that Destinye (though she pauzed a while) will never grow wearye of spinning the thred of his well deserved life.' Doll Leeke writes to Sir Ralph: 'I am conserned for my Nov. 30, 1659 pore brother & sister, for ther condision is ill by reson of thes alterasions in stat afairs, & may well mak them sad, but I trust thay shall have assistanc & protection from above, & it is no littell satisfaction to me that you are ther frind.' She longs for a visit from him. 'Really I wish it wear all the way carpets to tempt you.' 'The Troubles of y^e Times,' Sir Ralph replies, 'have lately given too much leasure to our Deare Natticock, but I hope there is a Blessing in store for him that will recompense his present losses.'

Mr. Butterfield is keeping a melancholy Christmas at Claydon. 'We expect here you should have no Dec. 25, 1659 great quiet a London, for the souldiers that passed up toward London this last weeke talkt openly of Plundering the city.' John Stewkeley, writing on 'St. Stephen's Day,' is expecting Christmas company every minute, the late tumults in the city have made his brother very solicitous about his London property.

Meanwhile, the uproar in the city increasing daily, and the Council of Officers in Lambert's absence being less and less able to cope with it, the old Rump showed fresh signs of life. On Monday the 26th they reassembled at Whitehall, marched with Speaker and Mace to Westminster Hall, and made a House and began upon business. Lambert's army had melted away in the northern snows without waiting for the enemy. 'No Government in the Nation,' wrote Evelyn, 'all in confusion; no Magistrate either own'd or pretended but the soldiers, & they not agreed. God Almighty have mercy on us, and settle us.' The Restoration was in the air, and in all men's minds as a hope or a fear, but as yet in no man's mouth. It is impossible to read these letters of eye-witnesses, giving the changes of opinion day by day, without realising how many various causes were driving men to this solution of England's difficulties.

The new year 1660, Evelyn's 'Annus Mirabilis,' had begun. John Stewkeley writes from Hampshire that 'the Rump is grown very big of late.' 'If any newes of consequence fall in your way that is not printed, it will bee very acceptable here, for Mercurius doth abuse us too often. What the Sword-bearer brought of Monke's coming up, may bee falsly rendered by him, therefore we desire you would undeceave us.' Peg Elmes hears how Monk is 'courted as he comes along on his march to town.' Sir Roger writes on the 26th: 'for newes I am much to seek for it . . . the Parl^t hath sett forth a declaration . . . which is very fair and plausible, it affects

Jan. 18 1660

Jan. 25, 1660

the Ministry, the Law, Universities, the people's liberties, & many other good things. Monk is, I suppose, what he was, & what that is, a farr wiser man then myself cannot tell ; I heare he lay at M^r Pierepoints on Thursday last . . . great confidence is expressed on both sides, if he satisfies both, he will be more lucky then ordinary.'

Dr. Denton on the same day writes : 'Young Sir Robert Pye brought a petition yesterday directed to the Speaker to be communicated to some of the members now sitting, they say tis a cutter, but as yet it is not extant. Coll. William Maxey died suddenly yesterday. . . . I heare just now that Robert Pye & one Fincher his comrade are sent to the Tower, if they are, it is but what they did expect. . . . Sir H. Crooke is dead & Sir Robert his son endeavours to make his title good to the pipe office.' Jan. 26, 1660

Sir Roger writes again, while Monk was pausing at St. Albans : 'On Fryday Monck is expected heere, & most men are tired out with the various prognostications that are made as to his future proceedings. Norfolk & Suffolk have sent up their declarations touchinge another kinde of Parl^t but I heare not of any more clapt up. Was Sir Robert Pye the smile that came from Moncks face, upon that occasion as you mention ? I hope so or rather wish that it was the result not of his disdain, but pleasant reception of that proposition made by the Lady.' Feb. 1, 1660

Neither Sir Roger nor Sir Ralph could so far forget their old fight against Charles I. in the best days of the Long Parliament as to feel any enthusiasm for promoting the return of Charles II., and they would not swell the crowd that waited upon Monk at every stage of his progress to London. Margaret Elmes reproaches her brother for his inaction : 'I wonder one soe exsackt in all thinges as your selfe is, should let soe greate a person as Moncke is to pas by soe neare you, without your invitation, or att least your going to complyment him with sum of your Neighbors ; I see nothinge can make you stur from your beloved Claydon.' Feb. 1, 1660

Feb. 7, 1660 'Lord Fiennes is gone to Broughton,' writes the Doctor, '& would not sitt because they act on a Commonwealth Bottom. If a free election come & he be chosen, he will sitt, or if this sitts & the Lords called in (of which there is some hopes) then he will sitt as two houses. I can say noe more but that if you are not a member, I misse of my aime.'

Feb. 8, 1660 Sir Roger writes on the 8th : 'Monck was at the house on Munday last who expresst himself so obscurely that most men know not what construction for to make of it.' Sir Roger was not in love with the Sphinx. He adds a postscript the next day : 'The Common Council was very stiff yesterday & will not submit to taxes, & would not own the Parl^{t}. Souldiers are gone this morning into the City, I suppose to reduce them, they will only make addresses to Monck.' Dr. Denton gives some further details. 'Just now newes is come that Monke & all his Army is marched into the Citty, on the occasion of the Feb. 9, 1660

Common Council beinge mighty high last night in giving the Warwickshire gentleman great thankes (volens, nolens the L^{d} Maior) promising to live and dy with them. It works apace now.' Monk was ordered by the Council of State to repress by force what was in effect a Royalist pronouncement by the city: he obeyed, and the city was overawed. 'Bristol for certaine,' Dr. Denton continues, 'standes on theire guard & will admitt noe souldiers. They that desired to passe through the other day, were dismounted at the gate leaving their horses & their Armes, & marched 10 & 10 quite through, with 10 & 10 of the city guard betweene each 10 of them; & when quite out of the citty had then delivered to them, theire horses & armes again. There are your men, Sir.'

Monk's attack upon the city nearly wrecked his own reputation as well as their gates and portcullises, but he saw his mistake, and retrieved it in a moment. Dr. Denton tells the story: '13th of February, 12 at night. . . . As soon as Monke had sent the enclosed letter to the house [requiring them to fill up their numbers at once, and to dissolve on the 6th of May to make room for a newly elected Parliament], he presently drew his army into the citty beinge Satterday & complied with the Citizens, which was quickly spread, & uppon which there were bonefires circum circa, & from one end of the city to the other, Westminster etc. & with such joy & acclamation as was never yett seene. The Speaker (who sate late) in his march homewards affronted, his men beaten, his windowes broken. A Rumpe in A chayre rosted at his gates, & bonefires made there. Never so many rumpes rosted as were that night. What this will produce nemo scit. About 12 A clock this day at noone, it was generally beleeved it would prove Ignis fatuus, for that Monke was strongly looked for to dine with some Grandees at White Hall, but did not. This eveninge there is some more life then in the morninge; the Common Council now sitting which will produce something, but whether mons or ridiculus mus I cannot divine; they endeavour all possible compliances with Monke & yett undermine. . . . Sir G. Gerard this day indited, Okey & Alured att the upper Bench for secludinge him. . . . If you goe to Twiford tell my Lord he lost such sport by going out of towne that he is never like to see the like.' It was evidently hopeless for Kate to get her husband away. 'Oxfordshire declaration is now delivered to Monke.'

The news is running like wildfire through Hampshire, where several private letters have been received. John Stewkeley rejoices that 'General Monk hath declared for a single Person (you may Imagin whom) and for a Free Parliament. . . . We may all soon meet if the Wind blow from Flanders: w^{ch} I pray for, pro Re: pro Ecle. Ang: pro reg: as a Subject, as a member, as an Englishman.' **Feb. 14, 1660**

The contrary report prevailed in London two days later. Dr. Denton is 'out of tune.' 'Monke inclines to much to favor an Ingagement for A Republiq without King, single person or house of Lords. . . . The expected writts should issue tomorrow they will be chosen the old way.'

The streets are full of soldiers. Pen, looking out of the windows of her London lodging, writes: 'I wish Munke may be so happy a Parson to this poore distressed Land, that he may merritt Applause from all parsons, as yett I am not so much taking with him, as to delight my self with aney sight of his men.' Feb. 15, 1660

Sir Roger sends his version of the reconciliation between Monk and the city and 'of the great joy that was conceived by inconsiderat persons (which were very numerous) by reason of his letter, which they pleased themselves with those constructions their phancies made of it, & no expressions were wanting to it. The bells & fyres fully discovered rather what they would have, then what they had: out of the same mouths proceed blessings & curses, for they who cursed him the day before for pulling down the gates, blesst him this day for coming into them. On Sunday thousands resorted to St. Paul's Church, to get a sight of him. He hath continued there ever since & severall of his forces at the Citty charge, who entertaine them with much seeming contentment. . . . What Monck will do to answer the expectations of all parties, I am to seek—though very many may be deceived, I shall be non of them. . . . Addresses are still made to him, people will not Feb. 16, 1660 be quiett. Lambert summoned to come in by this day, which if he refuse to doe then to be sequestred. This morning I was told that he was come in, which is contrary to what I heard yesterday. Sir H. Vane sent out of town, some sectaries, if report be true, disarmed on Tuesday night by Monck's order, without the knowledge of the higher powers. There are nothing but riddles asked. Secluded members as I learn visitt Monck. Some say they are up in the North & twenty other things as they would have themselves, but this is all uncertaine.'

Feb. 18, 1660 The Doctor writes: 'You may longe to heare of the fruits of the Bonefires, I can only in briefe tell you this, that all sides ply Monke with warm cloaths & he like a prudent person would fayne reconcile. I heare that he offered the secluded if they would only promise not to bringe in the King, that he did not doubt but to procure their sittinge. Dick Norton told him that freedom of Parl^{t} was the just right & interest of the nation & if they thought it fitt to bringe in the Turke, they ought not to be imposed on the contrary. Last night 10 & 10 of Rumpers & Secluders met before the Generall; the result of which I cannot yet learne, but I doubt nothinge but wranglinge.'

Feb. 21, 1660 Sir Roger announces the vote which would enable Sir Ralph to take his seat again, after sixteen years of 'seclusion.' 'Sir, without the least preamble to it or giving you an account of what pass't in order to the last and most unexpected turne: you may by this understande that the secluded members, by the assistance of Gen[l] Monck, were readmitted this day into the house in which place he was voted Cap[t] Gen[l] of all the forces of Eng[l] Scot[l] & Ire[l] under the Parl[t], Lawson to continue vice-Admirall.'

Feb. 22, 1660

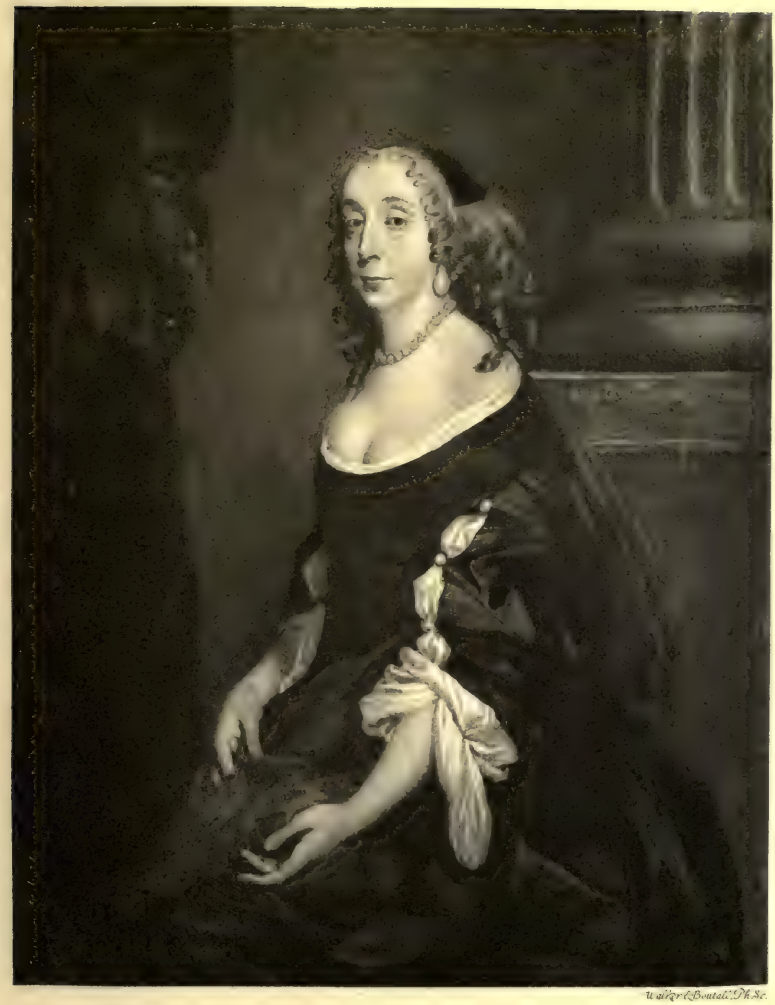
Dr. Denton writes the next day : 'Monke brought in the secluded members who act & vote as formally as before, & take noe notice of anythinge. Our Cozen Greenvile hath lost himselfe most wonderfully amongst his countrymen in refusinge to doe as other neighbours did, noe man dissentinge but himselfe. Sir R. Piggott hath done little lesse. Sir R. T[emple] carries it plum on all sides ; he writt to Dick Winwood by coach yesterday, he havinge notice over night that it would be. We knewe nothinge till about 9 A clock. I have sent to hasten Dick W. to his duty, they are all earnestly desired. I wish my Lord Wenman were in a condicion to come up.'

Penelope rejoices 'above all that by this new & great chang' she has lived to see her brother 'one more in a Capacitie to sarve the Country.' 'It would vex me to the hart to have us both out,' writes Dr. Denton, eager in the general excitement to add to the duties of his over-busy life ; 'but if Cavaliers are to be excluded we shall be mumpt.' There is also a talk of Sir Ralph standing for Westbury or Bedwin. He at first fights shy of election expenses, specially as the Parliament is expected to be a very short one. 'You say you will not stand, nor be at any charge,' writes Dr. Denton ; 'there is no great feare of my being qualified, & then I misse of my ayme if you are not chosen at Malton, where I ghesse the charge will be none or inconsiderable ; if there should come a dispute, a charge might arise but sure not much. My sister [Sherard] is sollicited for others, but she intends you or me, & you know I cannot be qualified, therefore you must.'

Kind congratulations pour in from Ditchley. Sir Henry Lee has just heard 'of the great news at London': 'I assure you,' he writes to Sir Ralph, 'it is the best wee have had this many years & trewly I am very glad Sir R. Var.: entends to serve his Country & friends in that Hon^{ble} imployment.' He offers to use his interest on Sir Ralph's behalf, and desires to see him 'at Ditchley, though I confesse it has nothing that deserves an invitation from Cladon, though I can promise no person to be more wellcome then yourselfe.' His mother, Lady Rochester, at once sets her agents to work, and writes to Mr. Thomas Yates to secure seats for Sir Ralph and her son in the elections for what was emphatically called a Free Parliament, though the electors seemed to be amiably ready to submit to the Countess's dictation, and to acknowledge it as 'their duty to their Country & their younge Lande Ladyes to serve Sir Ralph therein.' Lady Rochester writes: 'This day I received a letter from you, with all the good newes in it, for which I give you thanks, and also for the care you tell me you have taken for my sonne Lee's being chosen a Parliament man, in the next election. I was formerly spoken to

Feb. 23, 1660

Feb. 23, 1660



Walker & Boutall Ph. Sc.

Anne Rochester

Anne, Lady Lee,
afterwards Countess of Rochester.
from a painting by Lely at Ditchley.

for M^r Appletree, whome I must now lay absolutely aside by reason that S^r Ralphe Verney desires to bee one, who is a person whose owne merits is such, as it will bee a happinesse to the place, and they will have cause to give us thanks for him ; besides you know his relation to the children's businesse, obleiges me to doe him any service hee shall comand if there should be noe oath imposed nor engagement S^r Raphe will accept of it himselfe, and if there should be any reason to divert him, I shall desire it for his sonne. Good M^r Yates, next to my sonne Lee, let not S^r Raphe Verney faile of being chosen. What you shall say to the people of the place to encourage them to it, I shall leave to your prudence depending uppon your discreation in presenting his merrits, & truly it will bee much to my satisfaction to serve him in this, & it will bee very kindly taken from you by her that is, Your friend & servant, ANNE ROCHESTER.

'If my brother St. John bee not chosen, I shall rather have him disappointed then Sir Raphe Verney.'

Sir Ralph thinks the election may be managed 'if M^r Yates bee quicke & cordiall.' Westbury is to be tried first, and if that fails he is to be put up at Great Bedwin. He is in no hurry to claim his seat in 'Rumpe Major,' but is ready to stand if there is really to be 'a Free Parliament without any oath or engagement.' 'I am not confident,' he says, 'noe new quallifications will keepe me out, otherwise I must intreate you to looke favourably uppon my sonne.' Mr. Yates is most zealous—'if I should be wanting, I should neyther answer it to God, my Country, my Lady Rochester nor you.'

Lady Rochester, who is a most capable woman, has her hands full with the property belonging to her first husband's children and grandchildren, and the parliamentary patronage that went with it. Sir Ralph dockets one paper as 'Lady Rochester's letter about the rewards expected by the old Trustees & M^r Yates, also about Sir Harry Lee's going to Malmesbury.' She considers that Mr. Yates 'expects much for his reward, more then hee has reson for, though for the present it is my opinion the least notis is taken of it the better, betweene this & the next term we shall haav time too advise what is best too bee done in that perticular. That which startles mee most is the answare of the old trustees wherein they have put in something that . . . may ocasion a new suite . . . which will trobell us much, because at this time Fountaine which is much there frend is now owne of the Judges.'

March 9, 1660

'Turncoat Fountaine,' as the Royalists called him, was an able and excellent man, though, like other lawyers of the time, he had cultivated the art of facing both ways. At the time Lady Rochester wrote, he was one of the commissioners for the Great Seal; as his services were not to be had, Lady Rochester begged that Sir Ralph would write on behalf of her little heiresses, her grand-daughters, to 'Sir Arlandoe Bridgmen, too take a perticuler care in it that he may direct Yates . . . your interest may doe much with Sir Orlando.' Sir Ralph doubts not but that Sir Orlando will be careful of the children's concerns, 'but greate lawyers,' he adds, 'have commonly but little time to considder their clients' causes, unlesse they are well followed by theire friends.'

Lady Rochester continues to pour out her troubles. 'Here is such a doe about providing for burgeses place the nex perlement, I have ben soe trobeled with Solicitors, for those places in the children's estate that it has bin very trobelsom too mee, but I put them all off with telling them that I am alredy promised as far as my interest goes ; I hope that Yates wilbe carefull in securing a place for you & my sonne Lee, & those will bee as many as wee can compas. The towne of Mamsbery sent too my Sonne Lee that if hee would come in person they did hope too chuse him, though there were at least thirteine that did sue too bee choose in that towne, soe my Sonne meanes too goe thether at the election for feare of the worst. Sir if therebe anything wherein I may sarve you more then I doe yet understand bee pleased to command her that is your frind and sarvant, ANNE ROCHESTER.'

Sir Ralph writes to the young man himself, who had 'excused his coming to Claydon' : 'I wish your land at Ditchley were as dirty as the Isle of Doggs (& as rich too) and then perhapps you would thinke our Vale habitable.' He advises that Mr. Yates should go to Malmesbury 'a few dayes before him to facilitate the work.'

The rush for seats in the Parliament of 1660 was in marked contrast with the difficulty of getting candidates to stand under Cromwell's rule; the great interest and importance of the crisis was fully understood, and the part the House of Commons was to play in it. Edmund Verney has 'a very greate desire to serve in Parliament . . . . to advance my understanding unto a higher piche, by learning the intrigues of my owne native contry, whereof I am wholly ignorant.' Dr. Hyde encouraged his ambition while advising him to 'expect the qualifications now ham̃ering here.' 'Every day produces such vanitye of Contradictions, it is not possible to write any certaintie as yet. . . . I heare of no such Engagement as you write of, ... but certeynly I shall never advise you to hazard your Fortune, much lesse your Honour or Conscience for a little improvement of your experience.'

Jan. 30, 1660

Edmund had asked Dr. Hyde to send him some books, but he advises him to wait till he returns to town, 'then you are sure to please your selfe in the print, volume and edition. To spend this vacation y^{r} Father's studdy or the Parson's will furnish you.' His further counsel would not come amiss to a young member of Parliament of to-day. He considered there was much profit to be derived 'by sitting, learning, observing and voting there.' Edmund doubted his power of taking part in debate, and was conscious of some hesitation and imperfection in his speech. 'I have no English Authors to supply my want of words, but I'le be watchfull least I precipitate myselfe into any discourse, which shall exhaust my treasure of words so farr as to endanger the driving mee to a nonplus.' The lawyer is of opinion that more speakers fail for lack of thoughts than for faults of manner. 'Above all,' he says, 'the Resolution of deliberating and resolving what to say before you speak, will certeynly furnish you with words as well as matter, especially if you be carefull to speake the sense throughly, & avoyd the catch or repetition of the last word or syllable which fell from you. All which Time & Observance of yourselfe will certeynly produce. These things I should not inculcate to you whoe understand them soe well, but that I must find somewhat to fill my paper besides expressions of my strong affection for you.'

Feb. 29, 1660 Dr. Denton writes that it is generally believed the Parliament 'will dissolve this weeke; the sooner the better, for under the Rose I have noe faith in Rumpe Major, for I finde noe difference in specie, but only the Majus & Minus. Never a Barrell better Herings. My cozen Nat hath not been in & I ghesse will not. . . . Your pudding & Beefe were very welcome. The Beef the best that ever was eat, I eat a whole Round last night my self, & Sir Roger & others sliced it soundly alsoe. Thanks in Abundance from all quarters.'

Feb. ult. $16\frac{59}{60}$ Sir Roger's letter the same day shows us some of the difficulties in the House itself. 'I perceive it is no easy matter to release ourselves, so many doubts arise upon a debate about the dissolution, that I feare we shall sitt longer then was at first intended although it can not be longe, in regard of the writts that are to issue forth for another parl^{t} and therein lies no small scruple: which is as to the name in which they are to goe, which will with much difficulty be resolved. The Gen^{ll} Comission: the Instructions for the Councell of State, and bill for the continuance of the excise & customs passed on Satterday. A bill for the dissolving this parl^{t} was read the second time this day which was very short; but on a sudden by allmost a unanimous consent layd aside, and thought fitt to be included in that which is to pass for the next parl^{t}. S^{r} George Booth's comittee satt this morning by 7 or 8 a'clock. I saw him & S^{r} Tho: Middleton ther: I hope they will come of well: Massy walked in the hall this day though I saw him not.'

'Rumpe Maior begins to smell as ranke as Rumpe Minor,' writes the Doctor on the 1st of March. 'I knowe noe man pleased with their proceedings, here are great feares & jealousies that they have a mind to establish themselves, & to re-establish Richard . . . which is all at present, & enough to burne. . . . At the Committee last night they banded hard for one qualification to be that none elect or be elected, but such as had eminently acted against the Kinge, but it could not be carried: one moved uppon the Covenant the cleane contrary that none might but those that had acted for King & Parliament & I heare noe man spake against it.'

Doll Smith, sending for money, writes : 'I sent too barrors becaus I was afrayd to venture one of them alone now the souldiers are about.' March 1, 1660

'Yours of 28th Febr. I received not till late last night & that by chance,' writes Dr. Denton on the 8th of March. 'The truth is Kate was in fault for she received it, & put it in her pockett and never thought of it till then. The face of things begins to looke a Squint. The officers all day yesterday in great consultation & it is said they will declare high against the militias, A single person, & House of Lords etc. What the issue will be, nemo scit. I shall want a little hay dust to sow the holes in the parsnage yard, I pray let Will gather me a little out of the barne, I beeleeve a peck may serve. . . . The militia of Bucks is passed & I thinke neyther you nor Mun were not put in.' The lists were apparently of men excluded, as the Doctor rejoices that Edmund is now qualified to serve. 'Your son is turned Jockey (which you know I like bravely) beinge on Satterday brought in a Rider for the Militia in to the House.' He adds a week later : 'I wish Mun much ioy of his new office, but he hath pittiful comrades,' and Sir Roger writes on the 23rd : 'The bills for the Militia are passed ; & as I understand it Mr Verney's name is amongst the Commissioners.'

'Doctor Owen is like to give up to Doctor Kinnolly as to the Deanerie of Christ Church,' writes Dick Winwood. 'Sir Arthur is summoned to the house to answer some factiousness, Lambert is in the Tower.' March 9, 1660

March 8, 1660 'Lord Allington is dead of the smallpox,' writes the Doctor. 'This day Pryn moved not to dissolve, & for King & Lords with an appeale to the gentlemen of the Longe Robe to answer his arguments. He spake almost an houre. M^r Annesley answered ingeniously confessinge his Arguments were not to be answered yet moved to dissolve. Chief Justice St John though present spake not one word. He hath definitely lost himselfe by actinge soe like a sollicitour for a Commonwealth, to have a Parliament moulded as in '54, & to have Scotland & Ireland included therein. It is Haver du Poix whether they dissolve, or dissolve not, but most think they must dissolve.'

March 14, 1660 'They are resolved on my Brother Sherard, both for Knight [of the shire] and the Militia. I beleeve Sir Richard Temple doth hope the gentry will offer it to him, & if they doe I beleeve he will with many acknowledgments & much civility devolve it upon them againe, because he is sure elsewhere, & soe I hope are you except your D^r horse you out, which he longs to doe. . . . If you can gett in I'le looke to your deere & trees & buildinge to, for I love them all though I cannot manage them soe well as you.' Nancy writes her special news on the back of her father's letter. 'Youre furmity had broght forth a very fin keten for you, but by ill fortuin sumthing kiled her ketens & she proved very unnatureall & eat them up which is a gret greve to hir that is your duty full god daughter A. D.'

We watch the last dying throes of the Long Parliament. 'The house sat this day in order to a dissolution,' writes Sir Roger, 'but could not reach it, though they did not rise till nine at night . . . tomorrow they will dissolve, so much as in them lies, I longe for the time & for an opportunity of waiting upon you. . . . Bishop Wren voted out of the Tower.' March 15, 1660

Sir Roger writes again: 'Sir we are now at liberty, though much against some of our wills: after many sad pangs & groanes at last we did expire, and now are in another world. Yesterday morning the bill for presbitery & that for the 20,000*l.* for the generall passed, & by vote he is made steward for Hampton Court & the Parke, & so is at liberty to take the ayre when he pleases. About 6 o'clock we passed the bill of dissolution, with a perfect salvo to the rights & priviledges of the Lord's house after some opposition. Ther wanted not offers for a declaration of a higher nature which was to cleare the house from the guilt of the King's blood; but this being by prudent men thought unnecessary in regard of our revoking & obliterating those votes which put us out of the house grounded upon that vote which was made by us the longe night; so that that vote now stands good, & we think ourselves cleard from anything that followed. However some were pleased to protest & declare against it as an execrable act. Sir, theise were the last passages of that so long lived Parliament, which is not dead before, I question whether it lives not yet . . . though I may be dead March 17, 1660 as to a politick capacity, yet so longe as I live in any capacity, you may confidently call me & look upon me as, Sir, your faithful humble servant R. B.'

'Since the dissolution we have had but little newes,' writes Sir Roger on the 22nd, 'but that Ireland would fain stand upon its own legges, yet willing to decline a separation from us, what they declare seem to be riddles to me. . . . The Generall & Councell of State were invited to bed & board in to the Citty . . . the first they refused, not apprehending their condition to be so full of dainger as the Citty did, the latter they have accepted, & next Wednesday the Drapers treate them, & Generall Moncks Lady is the very single person of her sex that is courted to it.'

The last show of armed resistance came from Lambert, and he was routed by Tom's old Colonel, Dick Ingoldsby, a regicide whom the 'turning wheels of vicissitude' had brought round to the Royalist side, though he cheerfully declared that the King would probably cut his head off as soon as he landed.

And now the qualifications for candidates were being keenly discussed all through the country. 'I did little thinke,' Doctor writes to Sir Ralph on the 17th of March, 'that sure any Qualifications could have admitted me befor you . . . but there is a word *Voluntarily* which will doe it, & therefore (Protector like, "As thus advised") I doe thinke to try my fortune Att Malton. Therefore make sure of Lady Rochester's place if possible, for the house will not be altogeather soe comfortable if we be parted. . . . I ghesse your being of the Parliament soe longe after Edge Hill may perhaps lett you in, especially consideringe the temper the next House is like to be of.' 'I am glad to see you are in soe good hopes of a place. . . . I have beene with Sir Orlando Bridgman who writt & passed his word to my Lord Hartford for you . . . he tells me both your case & myne will be as our Judges prove, but there is no manner of daunger at all in beinge elected.' Sir Ralph becomes more keen about his own election as the time draws nearer; his cautious economy is forgotten. 'As to any matter of charge, I shall readily disburse it,' he writes to Yates; 'those things are not to bee had Drily: you know there is a time to cast away as well as a time to keepe, therefore being a meare stranger to all those persons and places, I must needs intreate you to doe both what & when & how you thinke fit . . . if you thinke it fit for me to doe anything or move in any kinde myselfe, if you beleeve they expect it from me, let me but know it. . . . I confesse I would be very loath to receive a Foyle . . . and if they will not chuse me, the lesse I appeare, the better it will bee.' Such conditions would seem ideal indeed to the harassed and hunted candidate of to-day.

March 21, 1660

March 11, 1660

Even before the elections Royalists who had lain low were showing signs of life. Robert Leslie, who had an interest in Sir Edmund Verney's patent for hackney coaches, reminds Sir Ralph of it. 'Tis true in Cromwell's time,' writes Sir Ralph, as of something long past and over, 'some rules were made about Hackney Coaches, but unlesse a Parliament settle it, I doubt nothing else can doe it.' Leslie writes again: March 23, 1660 'that whatsomever belonged to him by Patent, Pension, or Presepts, had been detained since the begeñing of these trobels. When I tuck my leave of his Majeste neire Paris, hee confirmed a former promis, which I had from him & his Father of blessed memory . . . all his Majeste's sarvents, & those that pretende to bee of that nomber, maks provesion each man fit for his qualete to give theare atendance upon his Majeste at his arrivall.' Leslie would be loath to beg, he has never done it, but as Sir Ralph has succeeded to his father's fortunes he 'must suckseide to his cindnes for his oulde frend, not onle with a littell mone, but with a gelding fit for a nold man to meete his Majeste on.'

Monk was sending private messages of devotion to Charles, though he still held his tongue, and would commit nothing to writing. The elections proceeded amidst great popular excitement. The Cavaliers, far from being 'mumped,' were elected in large numbers. Dr. Denton writes a long list of their friends who are returned, but, alas! after all the scheming neither he nor Sir Ralph are of the number. Doctor at the last yielded his interest at Malton to 'Phil Howard & M^r Marwood who served in Dick's Parliament a very short session & at theire very great charge, as I heare neare 200*l*.' There was much courteous communication between the candidates, neither wishing to stand in the other's way, but Doctor looks on this as 'noe Parl^t & that it will just call in — etc. if that. It is the next must ratify & act the greater things & he hopes to be of that.'

Lady Rochester's agents are afraid of her displeasure, though they have done their utmost to fulfil her honoured commands. Thomas Baxter has said much at Westbury 'of Sir Ralph's interest & great abilities,' and is 'goeing tomorrow to Bedwin. . . . My Lord Marquis notwithstanding some application hath beene made on Sir Ralph's behalf . . . useth all the endeavoures that can be possible against us. . . . If you but saw the straing actings, & the straing people we have to deale with, you would admire.' March 28, 1660

The brother Lady Rochester had been so willing to disappoint was taking his own measures; Mun's letter to Dr. Hyde, from Claydon, on the 16th of April gives us the result. 'S^r Walter St. Johns and my father are chosen, but theyr election will be disputed, because that two persons more are returned which were put in by my Lord of Hertford. I perceive that I shall not be one of this parliament though if it had pleased my father I might have been elected in 2 places of this county from whence I write unto you.' 'The violence & rashnes of the King's party disorders & distempers all,' writes the Doctor anxiously. 'The Gallican Ministers have written to ours assuring them that the Kinge is a very good Protestant and much on his behalf' the pendulum had not ceased to vibrate. April 4, 1660 April 6, 1660

April 17, 1660 Dr. Denton writes: 'Here is great noise of Lambert's beinge at the head of 20 troopes, 3,000 foot, taken Warwick Castle, the country comminge a maine to him, but not a word true. The worst newes is the K.'s interest cooles beyond expectacion, through the indiscretion of his rantinge party as its said, but I beleeve tis through the designe of some others, though they have been foolish enough.'

April 8, 1660 'In many places,' writes Dr. Thomas Hyde to Edmund, 'Secluded Members and Rumpers are equally scorned, and in truth Neither Barrell is better Herring.[1] I could wish you joyned with Sir R. Beryton, or some other thorough paced gentleman: for I have a mind to translate the odious French word into that English one. Let nicknames and distinctive expressions continue uppon Factionists, Calvinists, and Lutherans & to diversifye Sectaryes: Only the Right Christian is the Catholicke.'

When the Convention Parliament met on the 25th of April, 1660, England was in a frantic hurry to fetch the exile from over the water, and, as in another great revulsion of popular feeling, the only question men asked their neighbours seemed to be, 'Why are ye the last to bring the King back to his house?'

The news from London woke joyful echoes in the country. 'Such universall acclamations of wilde & sober joy I never yet saw,' wrote Mr. Butterfield in the first bright days of May; 'we had our Bonefire too & Bells ringing even at Claydon. . . . Heaven &

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[1] A proverbial expression of the day.

earth seeme to conspire to make a faire and fruitfull springe of plenty & joy to this poore kingdome; the seasonableness of which mercy now the generall face of Christendom seems to looke peaceable, ads much to our present happines. The fields & pastures begin to put on their best dresse as if it were to entertaine his Majesty in Triumph, & make him in love with his Native soyle. . . . Sure in the Middest of all our rejoycings it wilbe very difficult to satisfy ye Expectations of men and for Majesty to walk so evenly as not to give offence to our formerly dissenting grandees; ye Lord give them all wisdome and moderation.' But such reasonable misgivings were drowned in the chorus of jubilation.

An old blind prophet there was indeed, living far above the dust and tumult of the street, who made one passionate appeal after another to Monk, to the Parliament, and to the nation. 'By returning of our own foolish accord, nay running into the same bondage, we make vain & viler than dirt,' he said, 'the blood of so many thousand faithful & valiant Englishmen, who left us in this liberty, bought with their lives; losing by a strange after-game of folly all the battles we have won, all the treasure we have spent.' But the men and women in the street, weary of strife and harassing suspense, saw not what the prophet saw from his watch-tower, and gave little heed to his trumpet-blast. 'My head is so testicated with the times, between hope & fear, I know not what I do; if things be not as I hope, my heart will break, I cannot outlive it,' said one anxious woman, 'but I do not despair for I am confident it will be.'[1] 'I pray God send we may live to see peace in our times,' pleaded another, 'and that friends may live to in joye each other.'[2] Such homely words as these explain the Restoration, for London held but one Milton, and the voices in the street were many.

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[1] Lady Hobart, March 22, 1660.

[2] Penelope Denton, March 8, 1659.

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